
RINGAN GILHAIZE:

OR

THE COVENANTERS.

EDINBURGH :
PRINTED BY OLIVER & BOYD,
HIGH STREET.

RINGAN GILHAIZE;

THE COVENANTERS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“ANNALS OF THE PARISH,” “SIR ANDREW
WYLIE,” “THE ENTAIL,” &c.

• Their constancy in torture and in death,—
These on Tradition's tongue still live, these shall
On History's honest page be pictured bright
To latest times.

GRANAME'S SABBATH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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RINGAN GILHAIZE

CHAP. I.

IN the morning, all those who were in the house with the Earl of Murray and John Knox were early a-foot, and after prayers had been said, they went out to meet the Queen at her place of landing from the castle, which stands on an islet at some distance from the shore ; but, before they reached the spot, she was already mounted on her jennet and the hawks unhooded, so that they were obliged to follow her Highness to the ground, the Reformer leaning on the Earl, who proffered him his left arm as they walked up the steep bank together from the brim of the lake.

The Queen was on the upland when they

drew near to the field, and on seeing them approach she came ambling towards them, moving in her beauty, as my grandfather often delighted to say, like a fair rose caressed by the soft gales of the summer. A smile was in her eye, and it brightened on her countenance like the beam of something more lovely than light; the glow, as it were, of a spirit conscious of its power, and which had graced itself with all its enchantments to conquer some stubborn heart. Even the Earl of Murray was struck with the unwonted splendour of her that was ever deemed so surpassing fair; and John Knox said, with a sigh, "THE MAKER had indeed taken gracious pains with the goodly fashion of such perishable clay."

When she had come within a few paces of where they were advancing uncovered, she suddenly checked her jennet, and made him dance proudly round till she was nigh to John Knox, where, seeming in alarm, she feigned

as if she would have slipped from the saddle, laying her hand on his shoulder for support; and while he, with more gallantry than it was thought in him, helped her to recover her seat, she said, with a ravishing look, "The Queen thanks you, Master Knox, for this upholding," dwelling on the word this in a special manner; which my grandfather noticed the more, as he as well as others of the retinue observed, that she was playing as it were, in dalliance.

She then inquired kindly for his health, grieving she had not given orders for him to bed in the castle; and turning to the Earl of Murray, she chided his Lordship with a gentleness that was more winning than praise, why he had not come to her with Master Knox, saying, "We should then perhaps have not been so sharp in our controversy." But, before the Earl had time to make answer, she noticed divers gentlemen by name, and taking off her glove, made a most sweet salutation

with her lily hand to the general concourse of those who had by this time gathered around.

In that gracious gesture, it was plain, my grandfather said, that she was still scattering her feminine spells; for she kept her hand for some time bare, and though enjoying the pleasure which her beautiful presence diffused, like a delicious warmth into the air, she was evidently self-collected, and had something more in mind than only the triumph of her marvellous beauty.

Having turned her horse's head, she moved him a few paces, saying, "Master Knox, I would speak with you." At which he went towards her, and the rest of the spectators retired and stood aloof.

They appeared for some time to be in an easy and somewhat gay discourse on her part; but she grew more and more earnest, till Mr Knox made his reverence and was coming away, when she said to him aloud, "Well, do as you will, but that man is a dangerous man."

Their discourse was concerning the titular Bishop of Athens, a brother of the Earl of Huntly, who had been put in nomination for a superintendent of the church in the West Country, and of whose bad character her Highness, as it afterwards proved, had received a just account.

But scarcely had the Reformer retired two steps when she called him back, and holding out to him her hand, with which, when he approached to do his homage, she familiarly took hold of his and held it, playing with his fingers as if she had been placing on a ring, saying, loud enough to be heard by many on the field,—

“ I have one of the greatest matters that have touched me since I came into this realm to open to you, and I must have your help in it.”

Then, still holding him earnestly by the hand, she entered into a long discourse concerning, as he afterwards told the Earl of

Murray, a difference subsisting between the Earl and Countess of Argyle.

“ Her Ladyship,” said the Queen, for my grandfather heard him repeat what passed, “ has not perhaps been so circumspect in every thing as one could have wished, but her lord has dealt harshly with her.”

Master Knox having once before reconciled the debates of that honourable couple, told her Highness he had done so, and that ‘not having since heard any thing to the contrary, he had hoped all things went well with them.

“ It is worse,” replied the Queen, “ than ye believe. But, kind sir, do this much for my sake, as once again to put them at amity, and if the Countess behave not herself as she ought to do, she shall find no favour of me ; but in no wise let Argyle know that I have requested you in this matter.”

Then she returned to the subject of their contest the preceding evening, and said, with her sweetest looks and most musical accents,

“ I promise to do as ye required : I shall order all offenders to be summoned, and you shall see that I shall minister justice.

To which he replied, “ I am assured ~~then~~, madam, that you shall please God, and enjoy rest and tranquillity within your realm, which to your Majesty is more profitable than all the Pope’s power can be.” And having said this much he made his reverence, evidently in great pleasure with her Highness.

Afterwards, in speaking to the Earl of Murray, as they returned to Kinross, my grandfather noted that he employed many terms of soft courtliness, saying of her, that she was a lady who might, he thought, with a little pains, be won to grace and godliness, could she be preserved from the taint of evil counsellors ; so much had the winning sorceries of her exceeding beauty and her blandishments worked even upon his stern honesty, and enchanted his jealousy asleep.

When Master Knox had, with the Earl,

partaken of some repast, he requested that he might be conveyed back to Edinburgh, for that it suited not with his nature to remain sorning about the skirts of the court ; and his Lordship bade my grandfather be of his company, and to bid Sir Alexander Douglas, the master of his horse, choose for him the gentlest steed in his stable.

But it happened before the Reformer was ready to depart, that Queen Mary had finished her morning pastime, and was returning to her barge to embark for the castle, which the Earl hearing, went down to the brim of the loch to assist at her embarkation. My grandfather, with others, also hastened to the spot.

On seeing his Lordship, she inquired for “ her friend,” as she then called John Knox, and signified her regret that he had been so list to leave her, expressing her surprise that one so infirm should think so soon of a second journey ; whereby the good Earl being minded to cement their happy reconciliation, from which

he augured a great increase of benefits both to the realm and the cause of religion, was led to speak of his concern thereat likewise, and of his sorrow that all his own horses at Kinross being for the chase and road, he had none well-fitting to carry a person so aged, and but little used to the toil of riding.

Her Highness smiled at the hidden counselling of this remark, for she was possessed of a sharp spirit; and she said, with a look which told the Earl and all about her that she discerned the pith of his Lordship's discourse, she would order one of her own palfreys to be forthwith prepared for him.

When the Earl returned from the shore and informed Master Knox of the Queen's gracious condescension, he made no reply, but bowed his head in token of his sense of her kindness; and soon after, when the palfrey was brought saddled with the other horses to the door, he said, in my grandfather's hearing, to his Lordship, " It needs, you see, my

Lord, must be so ; for were I not to accept this grace, it might be thought I refused from a vain bravery of caring nothing for her Majesty's favour ;" and he added, with a smile of jocularity, " whereas I am right well content to receive the very smallest boon from so fair and blooming a lady."

Nothing of any particularity occurred in the course of the journey ; for the main part of which Master Knox was thoughtful and knit up in his own cogitations, and when from time to time he did enter into discourse with my grandfather, he spoke chiefly of certain usages and customs that he had observed in other lands, and of things of indifferent import ; but nevertheless there was a flavour of holiness in all he said, and my grandfather treasured many of his sweet sentences as pearls of great price.

CHAP. II.

BEFORE the occurrence of the things spoken of in the foregoing chapter, the great Earl of Glencairn, my grandfather's first and constant patron, had been dead some time ; but his son and successor, who knew the estimation in which he had been held by his father, being then in Edinburgh, allowed him, in consideration thereof, the privilege of his hall. It suited not however with my grandfather's quiet and sanctified nature to mingle much with the brawlers that used to hover there ; nevertheless, out of a respect to the Earl's hospitality, he did occasionally go thither, and where, if he heard little to edify the Christian heart, he learnt divers things anent the Queen and court that made his fears and anxieties wax stronger and stronger.

It seemed to him, as he often was heard to say, that there was a better knowledge of Queen Mary's true character and secret partialities among those loose varlets than among their masters ; and her marriage being then in the parlance of the people, and much dread and fear rife with the protestants that she would choose a papist for her husband, he was surprised to hear many of the lewd knaves in Glencairn's hall speak lightly of the respect she would have to the faith or spirituality of the man she might prefer.

Among those wuddy worthies he fell in with his ancient adversary Winterton, who, instead of harbouring any resentment for the trick he played him in the Lord Boyd's castle, was rejoiced to see him again : he himself was then in the service of David Rizzio, the fiddler, whom the Queen some short time before had taken into her particular service.

This Rizzio was by birth an Italian of very low degree ; a man of crouched stature, and

of an uncomely physiognomy, being yellow-skinned and black-haired, with a beak-nose, and little quick eyes of a free and familiar glance, but shrewd withal, and possessed of a pleasant way of winning facetiously on the ladies, to the which his singular skill in all manner of melodious music helped not a little ; so that he had great sway with them, and was then winning himself fast into the Queen's favour, in which ambition, besides the natural instigations of his own vanity, he was spirited on by certain powerful personages of the papistical faction, who soon saw the great efficacy it would be of to their cause, to have one who owed his rise to them constantly about the Queen, and in the depths of all her personal correspondence with her great friends abroad. But the subtle Italian, though still true to his papal breeding, built upon the Queen's partiality more than on the favour of those proud nobles, and, about the time of which I am now speaking, he carried his head at court as

bravely as the boldest baron amongst them. Still in this he had as yet done nothing greatly to offend. The protestant Lords, however, independent of their aversion to him on account of his religion, felt, in common with all the nobility, a vehement prejudice against an alien, one too of base blood, and they openly manifested their displeasure at seeing him so gorgeous and presuming even in the public presence of the Queen ; but he regarded not their anger.

In this fey man's service Winterton then was, and my grandfather never doubted that it was for no good he came so often to the Earl of Glencairn's, who, though not a man of the same weight in the realm as the old Earl his father, was yet held in much esteem, as a sincere protestant and true nobleman, by all the friends of the Gospel cause ; and, in the sequel, what my grandfather jealoused was soon very plainly seen. For Rizzio learning, through Winterton's espionage and that

of other emissaries, how little the people of Scotland would relish a foreign prince to be set over them, had a hand in dissuading the Queen from accepting any of the matches then proposed for her ; and the better to make his own power the more sicker, he afterwards laid snares in the water to bring about a marriage with that weak young prince, the Lord Henry Darnley. But it falls not within the scope of my narrative to enter into any more particulars here concerning that Italian, and the tragical doom which, with the Queen's imprudence, he brought upon himself ; for, after spending some weeks in Edinburgh, and in visiting their friends at Crail, my grandfather returned with his wife and Agnes Kilspinnie to Quharist, where he continued to reside several years, but not in tranquillity.

Hardly had they reached their home, when word came of quarrels among the nobility ; and though the same sprung out of secular debates, they had much of the leaven of re-

ligious faction in their causes, the which greatly exasperated the enmity wherewith they were carried on. But even in the good Earl of Murray's raid, there was nothing which called on my grandfather to bear a part. Nevertheless those quarrels disquieted his soul, and he heard the sough of discontents rising afar off, like the roar of the bars of Ayr when they betoken a coming tempest.

After the departure of the Earl of M'urray to France, there was a syncope in the land, and men's minds were filled with wonder, and with apprehensions to which they could give no name; neighbours distrusted one another; the papists looked out from their secret places, and were saluted with a fear that wore the semblance of reverence. The Queen married Darnley, and discreet men marvelled at the rashness with which the match was concluded, there being seemingly no cause for such uncomely haste, nor for the lavish favours that she heaped upon him. It

was viewed with awe, as a thing done under the impulses of fraud, or fainness, or fatality. Nor was their wedding-cheer cold when her eager love changed into aversion. Then the spirit of the times, which had long hovered in willingness to be pleased with her intentions, began to alter its breathings, and to whisper darkly against her. At last the murder of Rizzio, a deed which, though in the main satisfactory to the nation, was yet so foul and cruel in the perpetration, that the tidings of it came like a thunder-clap over all the kingdom.

The birth of Prince James, which soon after followed, gave no joy; for about the same time a low and terrible whispering began to be heard of some hideous and universal conspiracy against all the protestants throughout Europe. None ventured to say that Queen Mary was joined with the conspirators; but many preachers openly prayed that she might be preserved from their leagues in a way that

showed what they feared; besides this suspicion, mournful things were told of her behaviour, and the immoralities of her courtiers and their trains rose to such a pitch, compared with the chastity and plain manners of her mother's court, that the whole land was vexed with angry thoughts, and echoed to the rumours with stern menaces.

No one was more disturbed by these things than my pious grandfather; and the apprehensions which they caused in him came to such a head at last, that his wife, becoming fearful of his health, advised him to take a journey to Edinburgh, in order that he might hear and see with his own ears and eyes; which he accordingly did, and on his arrival went straight to the Earl of Glencairn, and begged permission to take on again his livery, chiefly that he might pass unnoticed, and not be remarked as having neither calling nor vocation. That nobleman was surprised at his request; but, without asking any question, gave him

leave, and again invited him to use the freedom of his hall ; so he continued as one of his retainers, till the Earl of Murray's return from France. But, before speaking of what then ensued, there are some things concerning the murder of the Queen's protestant husband,—the blackest of the sins of that age,—of which, in so far as my grandfather participated, it is meet and proper I should previously speak.

CHAP. III.

WHILE the cloud of troubles, whereof I have spoken in the foregoing chapter, was thickening and darkening over the land, the event of the King's dreadful death came to pass ; the which, though in its birth most foul' and monstrous, filling the hearts of all men with consternation and horror, was yet a mean in the hands of Providence, as shall hereafter appear, whereby the kingdom of THE LORD was established in Scotland.

Concerning that fearful treason my grandfather never spoke without taking off his bonnet, and praying inwardly with such solemnity of countenance, that none could behold him unmoved. Of all the remarkable passages of his long life it was indeed the most remarkable ; and he has been heard to

say, that he could not well acquit himself of the actual sin of disobedience, in not obeying an admonition of the spirit which was vouchsafed to him on that occasion.

For some time there had been a great variance between the King and Queen. He had given himself over to loose and low companions; and though she kept her state and pride, ill was said of her, if in her walk and conversation she was more sensible of her high dignity. All at once, however, when he was lying ill at Glasgow of a malady, which many scrupled not to say was engendered by a malignant medicine, there was a singular demonstration of returning affection on her part, the more remarkable and the more heeded of the commonalty, on account of its suddenness, and the events that ensued; for while he was at the worst she minded not his condition, but took her delights and pastimes in divers parts of the country. No sooner, however, had his strength overcome the disease, than

she was seized with this fond sympathy, and came flying with her endearments, seemingly to foster his recovery with caresses and love. The which excessive affection was afterwards ascribed to a guilty hypocrisy ; for, in the sequel, it came to light, that while she was practising all those winning blandishments, which few knew the art of better, and with which she regained his confidence, she was at the same time engaged in an unconjugal correspondence with the Earl of Bothwell. The King, however, was won by her kindness, and consented to be removed from among the friends of his family at Glasgow to Edinburgh, in order that he might there enjoy the benefits of her soft cares, and the salutary attendance of the physicians of the capital. The house of the provost of Kirk o' Field, which stood not far from the spot where the buildings of the college now stand, was accordingly prepared for his reception, on account of the advantages which it afforded for the free

and open air of a rising ground ; but it was also a solitary place, a fit haunt for midnight conspirators and the dark purposes of mysterious crime.

There, for some time, the Queen lavished upon him all the endearing gentleness of a true and loving wife, being seldom absent by day, and sleeping near his sick chamber at night. The land was blithened with such assurances of their reconciliation ; and the King himself, with the frank ardour of flattered youth, was contrite for his faults, and promised her the fondest devotion of all his future days. In this sweet cordiality, on Sunday, the 9th of February, A. D. 1567, she parted from him to be present at a masking in the palace ; for the Reformation had not then so penetrated into the habits and business of men as to hallow the Sabbath in the way it has since done amongst us. But before proceeding farther, it is proper to resume the thread of my grandfather's story.

He had passed that evening, as he was wont to tell, in pleasant gospel conversation with several acquaintances, in the house of one Raphael Doquet, a pious lawyer in the Canongate; for even many writers in those days were smitten with the love of godliness; and as he was returning to his dry lodgings in an entry now called Baron Grant's Close, he encountered Winterton, who, after an end had been put to David Rizzio, became a retainer in the riotous household of the Earl of Bothwell. This happened a short way aboon the Netherbow, and my grandfather stopped to speak with him; but there was a haste and confusion in his manner which made him rather eschew this civility. My grandfather, at the time, however, did not much remark it; but scarcely had they parted ten paces, when a sudden jealousy of some unknown guilt or danger, wherein Winterton was concerned, came into his mind like a flash of fire, and he felt as it were an invisible power constraining him to dog his steps, in so much,

that he actually did turn back. But on reaching the Bow, he was obligated to stop, for the ward was changing ; and observing that the soldiers then posting were of the Queen's French guard, his thoughts began to run on the rumour that was bruited of a league among the papist princes to cut off all the Reformed with one universal sweep of the scythe of persecution, and he felt himself moved and incited to go to some of the Lords and leaders of the Congregation, to warn them of what he feared ; but, considering that he had only a vague and unaccountable suspicion for his thought, he wavered, and finally returned home. Thus, though manifestly and marvellously instructed of the fruition of some bloody business in hand that night, he was yet overruled by the wisdom which is of this world, to suppress and refuse obedience to the promptings of the inspiration.

On reaching his chamber he unbuckled his belt, as his custom was, and laid down his

sword and began to undress, when again the same alarm from on high fell upon him, and the same warning spirit whispered to his 'mind's ear unspeakable intimations of dreadful things. Fear came upon him and trembling, which made all his bones to shake, and he lifted his sword and again buckled on his belt. But again the prudence of this world prevailed, and, heeding not the admonition to warn the Lords of the Congregation, he threw himself on his bed, without however unbuckling his sword, and in that condition fell asleep. But though his senses were shut his mind continued awake, and he had fearful visions of bloody hands and glimmering daggers glaming over him from behind his curtains, till in terror he started up, gasping like one that had struggled with a stronger than himself.

When he had in some degree composed his thoughts, he went to the window, and opened it, to see by the stars how far the night had passed. The window overlooked the North

Loch and the swelling bank beyond, and the distant frith and the hills of Fife. The skies were calm and clear, and the air was tempered with a bright frost. The stars in their courses were reflected in the still waters of the North Loch, as if there had been an opening through the earth, showing the other concave of the spangled firmament. But the dark outline of the swelling bank on the northern side was like the awful corpse of some mighty thing prepared for interment.

As my grandfather stood in contemplation at the window, he heard the occasional churme of discourse from passengers still abroad, and now and then the braggert flourish of a trumpet resounded from the royal masquing at the palace,—breaking upon the holiness of the night with the harsh dissonance of a discord in some solemn harmony.—And as he was meditating on many things, and grieving in spirit at the dark fate of poor Scotland, and the woes with which the children of salvation

were environed, he was startled by the apparition of a great blaze in the air, which for a moment lighted up all the land with a wild and fiery light, and he beheld in the glass of the North Loch, reflected from behind the shadow of the city, a tremendous eruption of burning beams and rafters burst into the sky, while a horrible crash, as if the chariots of destruction were themselves breaking down, shook the town like an earthquake.

He was for an instant astounded ; but soon roused by the clangour of an alarm from the castle ; and while a cry rose from all the city, as if the last trumpet itself was sounding, he rushed into the street, where the inhabitants, as they had flown from their beds, were running in consternation like the sheeted dead startled from their graves. Drums beat to arms ;—the bells rang ;—some cried the wild cry of fire, and there was wailing and weeping, and many stood dumb with horror, and could give no answer to the universal ques-

tion,—“ God of the heavens, what is this ?” Presently a voice was heard crying, “ The King, the King !” and all, as if moved by one spirit, replied, “ The King, the King !” Then for a moment there was a silence stiller than the midnight hour, and drum, nor bell, nor voice was heard, but a rushing of the multitude towards St Mary’s Port, which leads to the Kirk o’ Field.

Among others, my grandfather hastened to the spot by Todrick’s Wynd ; and as he was running down towards the postern gate, he came with great violence against a man who was struggling up through the torrent of the people, without cap or cloak, and seemingly maddent with terrors. Urged by some strong instinct, my grandfather grasped him by the throat ; for, by the glimpse of the lights that were then placing at every window, he saw it was Winterton. But a swirl of the crowd tore them asunder, and he had only time to cry, “ It’s ane of Bothwell’s men.”

The people caught the Earl's name ; but instead of seizing the fugitive, they repeated, " Bothwell, Bothwell, he's the traitor !" and pressed more eagerly on to the ruins of the house, which were still burning. The walls were rent, and in many places thrown down ; the west gable was blown clean away, and the very ground, on the side where the King's chamber had been, was torn as with a hundred ploughshares. Certain trees that grew hard by were cleft and riven as with a thunderbolt, and stones were sticking in their timber like wedges and the shot of cannon.

It was thought, that in such a sudden blast of desolation, nothing in the house could have withstood the shock, but that all therein must have been shivered to atoms. When, however, the day began to dawn, it was seen that many things had escaped unblemished by the fire ; and the King's body, with that of the servant who watched in his chamber, was found in a neighbouring garden, without

having suffered any material change,—the which caused the greater marvelling; for it thereby appeared that they were the only sufferers in that dark treason, making the truth plain before the people, that the contrivance and firing thereof was concerted and brought to maturity by some in authority with the Queen,—and who that was the people answered by crying as the royal corpse was carried to the palace, “Bothwell, Lord Bothwell, he is the traitor !”

CHAP. IV.

ALL the next day, and for many days after, consternation reigned in the streets of the city, and horror sat shuddering in all her dwelling-places. Multitudes stood in amazement from morning to night around the palace; for the Earl of Bothwell was within, and still honoured with all the homages due to the greatest public trusts. Ever and anon a cry was heard, “Bothwell is the murderer!” and the multitude shouted, “Justice, justice!” But their cry was not heard.

Night after night the trembling citizens watched with candles at their casements, dreading some yet greater alarm; and in the stillness of the midnight hour a voice was heard crying, “the Queen and Bothwell are the murderers!” and another voice replied, “Vengeance, vengeance! Blood for blood!”

Every morning on the walls of the houses writings were seen, demanding the punishment of the regicides,—and the Queen's name, and the name of Bothwell, and the names of many more, with the Archbishop of St Andrews at their head, were emblazoned on all sides as the names of the regicides. But Bothwell, with the resolute bravery of guilt in the confidence of power, heeded not the cry that thus mounted continually against him to Heaven, and the Queen feigned a widow's sorrow.

The whole realm was as when the ark of the covenant of the Lord was removed from Israel and captive in the hands of the Philistines. The injured sought not the redress of their wrongs; even the guilty were afraid of one another, and by the very cowardice of their distrust were prevented from banding at a time when they might have rioted at will. What aggravated these portents of a kingdom falling asunder, was the mockery of law and

justice which the court attempted. Those who were accused of the King's death ruled the royal councils, and were greatest in the Queen's favour. The Earl of Bothwell dictated the very proceedings by which he was himself to be brought to trial,—and when the day of trial arrived, he came with the pomp and retinue of a victorious conqueror—to be acquitted.

But acquitted, as the guilty ever needs must be whom no one dares to accuse, nor any witness hazards to appear against, his acquittal served but to prove his guilt, and the forms thereof the murderous participation of the Queen. Thus, though he was assoilzied in form of law, the libel against him was nevertheless found proven by the universal verdict of all men. Yet, in despite of the world, and even of the conviction recorded within their own bosoms, did the infatuated Mary and that dreadless traitor, in little more than three months from the era of their crime, rush into an adulterous marriage; but of the infamies

concerning the same, and of the humiliated state to which poor Scotland sank in consequence, I must refer the courteous reader to the histories and chronicles of the time—while I return to the narrative of my grandfather.

When the Earl of Bothwell, as I have been told by those who heard him speak of these deplorable blots on the Scottish name, had been created Duke of Orkney, the people daily expected the marriage. But instead of the ordinary ceremonials used at the marriages of former kings and princes, the Queen and all about her, as if they had been smitten from on high with some manifest and strange frenzy, resolved, as it were in derision and blasphemy, notwithstanding her own and the notorious popery of the Duke, to celebrate their union according to the strictest forms of the protestants; and John Knox being at the time in the West Country, his colleague, Master Craig, was ordered by the Queen in council

to publish the bans three several Sabbaths in St Giles' kirk.

On the morning of the first appointed day my grandfather went thither ; a vast concourse of the people were assembled, and the worthy minister, when he rose in the pulpit with the paper in his hand, trembled and was pale, and for some time unable to speak ; at last he read the names and purpose of marriage aloud, and he paused when he had done so, and an awful solemnity froze the very spirits of the congregation. He then laid down the paper on the pulpit, and lifting his hands and raising his eyes, cried with a vehement sadness of voice,—“ Lord God of the pure heavens, and all ye of the earth that hear me, I protest, as a minister of the gospel, my abhorrence and detestation of this hideous and adulterous sin ; and I call all the nobility and all of the Queen's council to remonstrate with her Majesty against a step that must cover her with infamy for ever and ruin past all remede.”

Three days did he thus publish the bans, and thrice in that manner did he boldly proclaim his protestation ; for which he was called before the privy council, where the guilty Bothwell was sitting ; and being charged with having exceeded the bounds of his commission, he replied with an apostolic bravery—

“ My commission is from the word of God, good laws, and natural reason, to all which this proposed marriage is obnoxious. The Earl of Bothwell, there where he sits, knows that he is an adulterer,—the divorce that he has procured from his wife has been by collusion,—and he knows likewise that he has murdered the King and guiltily possessed himself of the Queen’s person.”

Yet, notwithstanding, Mr Craig was suffered to depart, even unmolested by the astonished and overawed Bothwell ; but, as I have said, the marriage was still celebrated ; and it was the last great crime of papistical device that the Lord suffered to

see done within the bounds of Scotland. For the same night letters were sent to the Earl of Murray from divers of the nobility, entreating him to return forthwith ; and my grandfather, at the incitement of the Earl of Argyle, was secretly sent by his patron Glencairn to beg the friends of the state and the lawful prince, the son whom the Queen had born to her murdered husband, to meet without delay at Stirling.

Accordingly, with the flower of their vassals and retainers, besides Argyle and Glencairn, came many of the nobles ; and having protested their detestation of the conduct of the Queen, they entered into a Solemn League and Covenant, wherein they rehearsed, as causes for their confederating against the misrule with which the kingdom was so humbled, that the Scottish people were abhorred and vilipendit amongst all Christian nations ; declaring that they would never desist till they had revenged the foul murder of the King,

rescued the Queen from her thralldom to the Earl of Bothwell, and dissolved her ignominious marriage.

The Queen and her regicide, for he could not be called her husband, were panic-struck when they heard of this avenging paction. She issued a bold proclamation, calling on her insulted subjects to take arms in her defence, and she published manifestoes, all lies. She fled with Bothwell from Edinburgh to the castle of Borthwick; but scarcely were they within the gates when the sough of the rising storm obliged him to leave her, and the same night, in the disguise of man's apparel, the Queen of all Scotland was seen flying, friendless and bewildered, to her sentenced paramour.

The covenanting nobles in the meantime were mustering their clans and their vassals; and the Earls of Morton and Athol having brought the instrument of the League to Edinburgh, the magistrates and town-council signed the same, and, taking the oaths, issued in-

stanter orders for the burghers to prepare themselves with arms and banners, and to man the city walls. The whole kingdom rung with the sound of warlike preparations, and the ancient valour of the Scottish heart was blithened with the hope of erasing the stains that a wicked government had brought upon the honour of the land.

Meanwhile the regicide and the Queen drew together what forces his power could command and her promises allure, and they advanced from Dunbar to Carberry-hill, where they encamped. The army of the Covenanters at the same time left Edinburgh to meet them. Mary appeared at the head of her troops; but they felt themselves engaged in a bad cause, and refused to fight. She exhorted them with all the pith of her eloquence;—she wept,—she implored,—she threatened,—and she reproached them with cowardice,—but still they stood sullen.

To retreat in the face of an enemy who had

already surrounded the hill on which she stood was impracticable. In this extremity she called with a voice of despair for Kirkcaldy of Grange, a brave man, whom she saw at the head of the cavalry by whom she was surrounded, and he having halted his horse and procured leave from his leaders, advanced toward her. Bothwell, with a few followers, during the interval, quitted the field; and, as soon as Kirkcaldy came up, she surrendered herself to him, and was conducted by him to the head-quarters of the Covenanters, by whom she was received with all the wonted testimonials of respect, and was assured, if she forsook Bothwell and governed her kingdom with honest councils, they would honour and obey her as their sovereign. But the common soldiers overwhelmed her with reproaches, and on the march back to Edinburgh poured upon her the most opprobrious names.

“ Never was such a sight seen,” my grand-

father often said, “ as the return of that abject Princess to her capital. On the banner of the League was depicted the corpse of the murdered king her husband lying under a tree, with the young prince his son kneeling before it, and the motto was, “ Judge and revenge my cause, O Lord.” The standard-bearer rode with it immediately before the horse on which she sat weeping and wild, and covered with dust, and as often as she raised her distracted eye the apparition of the murder in the flag fluttered in her face. In vain she supplicated pity,—yells and howls were all the answers she received, and volleys of execrations came from the populace, with Burn her, burn her, bloody murtheress ! Let her not live !”

In that condition she was conducted to the provost's house, into which she was assisted to alight, more dead than alive, and next morning she was conveyed a prisoner to Lochleven castle, where she was soon after com-

pelled to resign the crown to her son, and the regency to the Earl of Murray, by whose great wisdom the Reformation was established in truth and holiness throughout the kingdom,—though for a season it was again menaced when Mary effected her escape, and dared the cause of the Lord to battle at Langside. But of that great day of victory it becomes not me to speak, for it hath received the blazon of many an abler pen ; it is enough to mention, that my grandfather was there, and after the battle that he returned with the army to Glasgow, and was present at the thanksgiving. The same night he paid his last respects to the Earl of Murray, who permitted him to take away, as a trophy and memorial, the gloves which his Lordship had worn that day in the field, and they have ever since been sacredly preserved at Quharist, where they may be still seen. They are of York buff ; the palm of the one for the right hand is still blue, with the mark of the sword's

hilt, and the forefinger stool is stained with the ink of a letter which the Earl wrote on the field to Argyle, who had joined the Queen's faction ; the which letter, it has been thought, caused the swithering of that nobleman in the hour of the onset, by which Providence gave the Regent the victory—a conquest which established the Gospel in his native land for ever.

CHAP. V.

AFTER the battle of Langside many of the nobles and great personages of the realm grew jealous of the good Regent Murray ; and, by their own demeanour, caused him to put on towards them a reserve and coldness of deportment, which they construed as their feelings and fancies led them, much to his disadvantage ; for he was too proud to court the good-will that he thought was his due. But to all people of a lower degree, like those in my grandfather's station, he was ever the same punctual and gracious superior, making, by the urbanity of his manner, small courtesies recollected and spoken of as great favours, in so much, that being well-beloved of the whole commonalty, his memory, long after his fatal death, was held in great estimation

among them, and his fame as the sweet odour of many blessings.

Few things, my grandfather often said, gave him a sorer pang than the base murder by the Hamiltons of that most eminent worthy; and in all the labours and business of his long life, nothing came ever more pleasant to his thoughts, than the remembrance of the part he had himself in the retribution, with which their many bloody acts were in the end overtaken and punished. Indeed, as far as concerns their guiltiest instigator and kinsman, the adulterous Antichrist of St Andrews, never was a just vengeance and judgment more visibly manifested, as I shall now, with all expedient brevity, rehearse, it being the last exploit in which my grandfather bore arms for the commonweal.

Bailie Kilspinnie of Crail having dealings with certain Glasgow merchants, who sold plaiding to the Highlanders of Lennox and Cowal, finding them doure in payment, owing,

as they said, to their customers lengthening their credit of their own accord, on account of the times, the west having been from the battle of Langside unwontedly tranquil, he, in the spring of 1571, came in quest of his monies, and my grandfather having notice thereof, took on behind him on horseback, to see her father, Agnes Kilspinnie, who had lived in his house from the time of his marriage to her aunt, Elspa Ruet. And it happened that Captain Crawford of Jordanhill, who was then meditating his famous exploit against the castle of Dumbarton, met my grandfather by chance in the Trongait, and knowing some little of him, and of the great regard in which he was held by many noblemen, for one of his birth, spoke to him cordially, and asked him to be of his party, assigning, among other things, as a motive, that the great adversary of the Reformation, the Archbishop of St Andrews, had, on account of the doom and outlawry pronounced upon him, for being accessary both

to the murder of King Henry, the Queen's protestant husband, and of the good Regent Murray, taken refuge in that redoubtable fortress.

Some concern for the state of his wife and young family weighed with my grandfather while he was in communion with Jordanhill; but after parting from him, and going back to the Saracen's inn in the Gallowgait, where Bailie Kilspinnie and his daughter were, he had an inward urging of the spirit, moving him to be of the enterprise, on a persuasion, as I have heard him tell himself, that without he was there something would arise to balk the undertaking. So he was in consequence troubled in thought, and held himself aloof from the familiar talk of his friends all the remainder of the day, wishing that he might be able to overcome the thirst which Captain Crawford had bred within him to join his company.

Bailie Kilspinnie seeing him in this perplex-

ity of soul, spoke to him as a friend, and searched to know what had taken possession of him, and my grandfather, partly moved by his entreaty, and partly by the thought of the great palpable Antichrist of Scotland, who had done the bailie's fireside such damage and detriment, being in a manner exposed to their taking, told him what had been propounded by Jordanhill.

“ Say you so,” cried the bailie, remembering the offence done to his family, “ say you so ; and that he is in a girn that wants but a manly hand to grip him. Body and soul o’ me, if the thing’s within the power of the arm of flesh, he shall be taken, and brought to the wuddy, if the Lord permits justice to be done within the realm of Scotland.”

The which bold and valorous breathing of the honest magistrate of Crail kindled the smoking yearnings of my grandfather into a bright and blazing flame, and he replied—

“ Then, sir, if you be so minded, I cannot perforce abide behind, but will go forth with you to the battle, and swither not with the sword till we have effected some notable achievement.”

They accordingly went forthwith to Captain Crawford, and proffered to him their service; and he was gladdened that my grandfather had come to so warlike a purpose; but he looked sharply at the bailie, and twice smiled to my grandfather, as if in doubt of his soldiership, saying, “ But, Gilhaize, since you recommend him, he must be a good man and true.”

So the same night they set out at dusk, with a chosen troop and band of not more than two hundred men; a boat, provided with ladders, dropped down the river with the tide, to be before them.

By midnight the expedition reached the bottom of Dumbuck-hill; where, having ascertained that the boat was arrived, Jordan-

hill directed those aboard to keep her close in with the shore, and move with their march.

The evening when they left Glasgow was bright and calm, and the moon, in her first quarter, shed her beautiful glory on mountain, and tower, and tree, leading them as with the light of a heavenly torch; and when they reached the skirts of the river, it was soon manifest that their enterprise was favoured from on high. The moon was by that time set, and a thick mist came rolling from the Clyde and the Leven, and made the night air dim as well as dark, veiling their movements from all mortal eyes.

Jordanhill's guide led them to a part of the rock which was seldom guarded, and shewed them where to place their ladders. He had been in the service of the Lord Fleming, the governor, but on account of contumelious usage had quitted it, and had been the contriver of the scheme.

Scarcely was the first ladder placed when

the impatience of the men brought it to the ground ; but there was a noise in the ebbing waters of the Clyde, that drowned the accident of their fall, and prevented it from alarming the soldiers on the watch. This failure disconcerted Jordanhill for a moment; but the guide fastened the ladder to the roots of an ash-tree, which grew in a cleft of the rock, and to the first shelf of the precipice they all ascended in safety.

The first ladder was then drawn up, and placed against the upper story, as it might be called, of the rock, reaching to the gap where they could enter into the fortress, while another ladder was tied in its place below. Jordanhill then ascended, leading the way, followed by his men, the bailie of Crail being before my grandfather.

They were now at a fearful height from the ground; but the mist was thick, and no one saw the dizzy eminence to which he had attained. It happened, however, that just

as Jordanhill reached the summit, and while my grandfather and the bailie were about half-way up the ladder, the mist below rolled away, and the stars above shone out, and the bailie, casting his eyes downward, was so amazed and terrified at the eagle-flight he had taken, that he began to quake and tremble, and could not mount a step farther.

At that juncture delay was death to success. It was impossible to pass him. To tumble him off the ladder, and let him be dashed to pieces, as some of the men both above and below roughly bade my grandfather do, was cruel. All were at a stand.

Governed, however, by a singular inspiration, my grandfather took off his own sword-belt, and also the bailie's, and fastened him with them to the ladder by the oxters and legs, and then turning round the ladder, leaving him so fastened pendent in the air on the lower side, the assailants ascended over his belly, and courageously mounted to their perilous duty.

Jordanhill shouted as they mustered on the summit. The officers and soldiers of the garrison rushed out naked, but sword in hand. The assailants seized the cannon. Lord Fleming, the governor, leaped the wall into the boat that had brought the scaling ladders, and was rowed away. The garrison thus deserted surrendered, and the guilty prelate was among the prisoners.

As soon as order was in some degree restored, my grandfather went, with two other soldiers, to where the bailie had been left suspended, and having relieved him from his horror, which the breaking daylight increased by showing him the fearful height at which he hung, he brought him to Jordanhill, who, laughing at his disaster, ordered him to be one of the guard appointed to conduct the Archbishop to Stirling.

In that service the worthy magistrate proved more courageous, and upbraided the prisoner several times on the road for the ill

he had done to him. But that traitorous high-priest heard his taunts in silence, for he was a valiant and proud man; such indeed was his gallant bearing in the march, that the soldiers were won by it to do him homage as a true knight: and had he been a warrior as he was but a priest, it was thought by many that, though both papist and traitor, they might have been worked upon to set him free: To Stirling, however, he was carried; and on the fourth day, from the time he was taken, he was executed on the gallows; where, notwithstanding his guilty life, he suffered with the bravery of a gentleman dying in a righteous cause, in so much, that the papists honoured his courage, as if it had been the virtue of a holy martyr; and Bailie Kilspinnie all his days never ceased to wonder how so wicked a man could die so well.

HAVING thus set forth the main passages in my grandfather's life, I should now quit the public highway of history, and turn for a time into the pleasant footpath of his domestic vineyard, the plants whereof, under his culture, and the pious waterings of Elspa Ruet, my excellent progenitrex, were beginning to spread their green tendrils and goodly branches, and to hang out their clusters to the gracious sunshine, as it were in demonstration to the heavens that the labourer was no sluggard, and as an assurance that in due season, under its benign favour, they would gratefully repay his care with sweet fruit. But there is yet one thing to be told, which, though it may not be regarded as germane to the mighty

event of the Reformation, grew so plainly out of the signal catastrophe related in the foregoing chapter, that it were to neglect the instruction mercifully intended, were I not to describe all its circumstances and particularities as they came to pass.

Accordingly to proceed. In the winter after the storming of Dumbarton Castle, Widow Ruet, the mother of my grandmother, hearing nothing for a long time of her poor donsie daughter Marion, had, from the hanging of Archbishop Hamilton, the antichristian paramour of that misguided creature, fallen into a melancholy state of moaning and inward grief, in so much, that Bailie Kilspinnie wrote a letter, invoking my grandfather to come with his wife to Crail, that they might join together in comforting the aged woman; which work of duty and of charity they lost no time in undertaking, carrying with them Agnes Kilspinnie to see her kin.

Being minded, both in the going and the

coming, to partake of the feast of the heavenly and apostolic eloquence of the fearless Reformer's life-giving truths, they went by the way of Edinburgh; and in going about while there, to show Agnes Kilspinnie the uncos of the town, it happened as they were coming down from the Castle-hill, in passing the Weigh-house, that she observed a beggar woman sitting on a stair seemingly in great distress, for her hands were fervently clasped, and she was swinging her body backwards and forwards like a bark without a rudder on a billowy sea, when the winds of an angry heaven are let loose upon't.

What made this forlorn wretch the more remarkable, was a seeming remnant of better days in something about herself, besides the silken rags of garments that had once been costly. For, as she from time to time lifted her delicate hands aloft in her despairing ecstasy, the scrap of blanket, which was all her mantle, fell back, and showed such lily and lady-like

arms, that it was impossible to look upon her without compassion, and not also to wonder from what high and palmy estate she had fallen into such abject poverty.

My grandfather and his wife, with Agnes, stopped for a moment, and conferred together about what alms they would offer to a gentlewoman brought so low ; when she, observing them, came wildly towards them, crying, “ For the Mother of God, to save a famishing outcast from death and perdition.”

Her frantic gesture, far more than her papistical exclamation, made their souls shudder ; and before they had time to reply, she fell on her knees, and taking Elspa by the hand, repeated the same vehement prayer, adding, “ Do, do, even though I be the vilest and guiltiest of womankind.”

“ Marion Ruet !—O, my sister !—O, my dear Marion !” as wildly and as wofully did my grandmother, in that instant, also cry aloud, falling on the beggar-woman’s neck,

and sobbing as if her heart would have burst; for it was indeed the bailie's wife, and the mother of Agnes, that supplicated for a morsel.

This sad sight brought many persons around, among others a decent elderly carlin that kept a huxtry shop close by, who pitifully invited them to come from the public causey into her house; and with some difficulty my grandfather removed the two sisters thither. Agnes Kilspinnie, poor thing, following like a demented creature, not even able to drop a tear at so meeting with her humiliated parent, who, from the moment that she was known, could only gaze like the effigy of some extraordinary consternation carved in alabaster stone.

When they had been some time in the house of old Ursie Firikins, as the kind carlin was called, Elspa Ruet all the while weeping like a constant fountain, and repeating "Marion, Marion!" with a fond and sorrowful ten-

derness that would allow her to say no more, my grandfather having got a drink of meal and water prepared, gave it to the famished outcast, and she gradually recovered from her stupor.

For many minutes, however, she sat still and said nothing, and when she did speak, it was in a voice of such misery of soul, that my grandfather never liked to tell what terrible thoughts the remembrance of it ever gave him. I shall therefore not venture to repeat what she said, farther than to mention, that, having sunk down on her knees, she spread her hands aloft and exclaimed,—“ Ay, the time’s come now, and the words of her prophecy, that never ceased to dirl in my soul, are fulfilled. I will go back to Crail—my penitence shall be seen in my shame ;—I will go openly, that all may take warning—and before all, in the face of day, will I confess the wrongs I hae done to my gudeman and bairns.”

She then rose and said to her sister, "Elsa, ye hae heard my vow, and this very hour I will begin my pilgrimage."

Some farther conversation ensued, in which she told them, that she had run a woful course after the havock at St Andrews; but, though humbled to the dust, and almost perishing of hunger, pride had still warsled with penitence, and would not let her return to seek shelter from her mother. "But at last," said she, "all has now come to pass, and it is meet I submit to what is so plainly required of me." Then turning to her daughter, she looked at her for some time with a watery and inquiring eye, and would have spoken, but her heart filled full and she could only weep.

By way of consolation, my grandfather told her they were then on their way to Crail, and that, as soon as they had procured for her some fit apparel, they would take her with them. At these words she lifted the skirt of her ragged gown, and looking at it for a moment,

smiled, as if in contempt of all things, saying—

“ No ; this is the livery of Him that I hae served so weel. It is fit that my friends should behold the coat of many colours, and the garment of praise wherewith He rewards all those that serve Him as I hae done.” And no admonition, nor any affectionate petition, could shake her sad purpose.

“ But,” said she, “ I ought not to shame you on the road ; and yet, Elspa, at least till the entrance of the town, let me travel with you ; for when I hae dreed my penance, we must part never to meet again. Darkness and dule is my portion now in this world. I hae earnt them, and it is just that I should enjoy them. They are my ain conquest, bought wi’ the price of every thing but my soul ; and wha kens but for this meeting that it might hae been bartered away too.”

In nothing, however, of all that then passed, was there any thing which so moved the tran-

quail heart of my grandfather, as the looks which, from time to time, the desolate woman cast at her daughter. Fain she seemed to speak, and to catch her in her arms; but ever and anon the sense of her own condition came upon her, and she began to weep, crying,—“ No, no : I darena do that—I darena even mysel’ to a parent’s privilege after what I hae done.”

The poor lassie sat unable to make any answer; but at last, in a timid manner, she took her mother softly by the hand, and the fond and lowly penitent, for a few moments, allowed it to linger in her grip, willing to have left it there; but suddenly stung by her conscience she snatched it away, and again broke out into piercing lamentations and confessions of unworthiness.

Meanwhile the charitable Ursie Firikins had made ready a mess of porridge, and the mournful Magdalen being soothed and consoled, was persuaded to partake. And after-

wards, when they had sat some time, and the crowd, which had gathered out of doors 'in the street, was dispersed, my grandfather went to his lodgings; and having paid his lawin, returned to the two sisters and Agnes Kilspinnie, and they all walked to the shore of Leith together, where they found a boat going to Kinghorn, into which they embarked; and having slept there, they hired a cart to take them to Crail next morning, every one who saw them wondering at the dejected and ruinous appearance of the penitent. The particulars, however, of their journey, and of her reception in her native place, will furnish matter for another chapter.

CHAP. VII.

WHEN they came within a mile of the town, where a small public stood, that wayfaring men were wont to stop and refresh themselves at, my grandfather urged the disconsolate Marion, who had come all the way from Kinghorn without speaking a single word, to alight from the cart, and remain there till the cloud of night, when she might go to her mother's unafflicted by the gaze of the pitiless multitude.

To this, at first, she made no answer; but leaping out of the cart, and standing still for a moment, she looked wistfully at her sister and daughter, and then began to weep, crying, "Gang ye awa, and no mind me; ye canna thole, and oughtna to share what I maun bear; and I'll never break another vow:

so, in the face o' day, and of a' people, I'm constrained to enter Crail,—first, to confess my guilt at the door of the honest man and his bairns that I hae sae disgraced ; and syne to beg my mother to take in the limmer that was scofft frae door to door, till the blessed time when ye were sent to stop me laying desperate hands on mysel'."

Elspa remonstrated with her for some time, but she was not to be entreated : " My guilt and my shamelessness were public," said she, " and it is meet that the world should behold what hae been the wages I hae earnt, and the depth of the humiliation to which my vain and proud heart has been brought ; so, go ye on wi' your gudeman and Agnes, and let me come by mysel'."

" No, Marion," replied her sister, " that sha'na be ; I'll no let you do that : if ye will make sic a pilgrimage, I'll bear you company ; for I can ne'er be ashamed nor mortified in being wi' you, when ye are seeking again the

path of righteousness that ye were sae beguil't to quit."

" Say nae I was beguil't ; say naething to gar me think less o' my fault than I should : there was nae beguiler but my ain vain and sinful nature."

Her daughter, who had all this time stood silent with the tear in her e'e, then said, " I'll gang wi' you, mother, too."

" Mother !—O Agnes Kilspinnie, dinna sae wrang yoursel', and your honest father, as to ca' the like o' me mother. But did ye say ye would come wi' me ?"—and she dropt vehemently on her knees, and, spreading her arms to the skies, cried out with a loud and wild voice—

" God, God ! is thy goodness so great, that thou canst already vouchsafe to me a mercy like this ?"

Seeing her so bent on going into the town in her miserable estate, and his wife and her daughter so mindit to go with her, my grând-

father said it would be as well for him to run forward and prepare her mother for her coming ; so he left them, and hastened into the town, thinking they would come in the cart ; but when he was gone, Marion, still in the hope she might get her sister and daughter dissuaded from accompanying her, told them that she was resolved to go on her bare feet ; which, however, made them in pity still adhere the more closely to their determination ; and, having paid the Kinghorn man for his cart, the three set forward together, Elspa on the right hand and Agnes on the left hand of the lowly penitent.

In the meantime my grandfather hastened to the dwelling of Widow Ruet, his gude-mother, to tell her who was coming, and to prepare her aged mind for the sore shock. For though she was a sectarian of the Roman seed, she was nevertheless a most devout character, and abided more in the errors of her religion, because she thought herself too old

to learn a new faith, than from that obstinacy of spirit which in those days so abounded in the breasts of the papisticals.

The news were at first as glad tidings to the humane old woman; but every now and then she began to start, and to listen,—and a tear fell from her eye. When she heard the voice of any one talking in the street, or the sound of a foot passing, she hurried to the window and looked hastily out. The struggle within her was great, and it grew every minute stronger and stronger; and after walking very wofully divers times across the floor, she went and closed the shutters of her window, and sitting down gave full vent to her grief. In that state she had not been long, when the sough of a din gathering at a distance was heard.

“Mother of Christ!” she cried, starting up, clapping her hands, “Mother of Jesus, thou hast seen the fruit of thy womb exposed to ignominy. By thine own agonies in that

hour, I implore thy support. O blessed Mary, thy sorrow was light compared to my burden, for thy bairn was holy, and meek, and kind, and without sin. But thou hast known what it was to sit by thy baby sleeping in its innocence; thou hast known what it was to love it for the very troubles it then gave thee. By the remembrance of that sweet watching and care, O pity me, and help me to receive my erring bairn!"

My grandfather could not stand her lament and ejaculations, and hearing the sound drawing nearer and nearer, he went out of the house to see if his presence might be any protection; but the sight he saw was even more sorrowful than the aged mother's grief.

Instead of the cart in which he expected to see the women, he beheld them coming along, side by side, together, attended by a great multitude; doors and windows flew open as they came along, and old and young looked out. Many cried, "She has been well serv't

for her shame." Some laughed ; and the young turned aside their heads to hide their tears. Among others that ran from the causey-side to look in the face of Marion—still beautiful, though faded, but shining with something brighter than beauty—there was a little boy that went up close to her, and took her by the hand, without speaking, and led her along. He was her own son ; but still she moved not her solemn heavenward eye, though a universal sobbing burst from all the multitude ; and my grandfather, at the piteous pageantry, was no longer able to remain master of his feelings. Seeing, however, that the mournful actors therein were going on towards Bailie Kilspinnie's, and not intending to stop, as he expected they would, at Widow Ruet's door, he ran forward to warn his old friend ; but in this he was too late ; some one had been already there ; and he found the poor man, with his three other children, standing at the door, seemingly utterly

at a loss to know what his duty should be ; nor was my grandfather in any condition of mind to help him with advice.

At that juncture the multitude came rushing on before the women, and halted in front of the bailie's house ; for, seeing him and his bairns, they were taught, by some sense of gentle sympathy, to divide and retire to a distance, leaving an open and silent space for the penitent to go forward.

When Agnes Kilspinnie and her brother saw their father and brother and sisters at the door, they quitted their mother and joined them, as if instructed by an instinct, while she slowly approached.

Elsa Ruet, who had hitherto maintained a serene and resigned composure of countenance, was so moved at this sad spectacle, that my grandfather, seeing her distress, stepped out and caught her in his arms, and supported her from falling, she was so faint with anguish of heart.

In the same moment, with a look that struck awe and consternation into every one around, Marion stepped on towards her husband and children, and gazed at them, and was dropping on her knees, when the bailie caught her in his arms, as if he would have carried her into the house. But he faltered in his purpose ; and, casting his eyes on the five weans whom she had so deserted, he unloosed his embrace, and, gathering them before him, went in and shut the door.

The multitude uttered a fearful sough ; Elspa Ruet, roused by it, rushed from my grandfather towards her sister, and stooping, tried to raise her up. Poor Marion, still kneeling, looked around to the people, who stood all as still as mourners at an interment, and her dark ringlets falling loose, made her pale face appear of an unearthly fairness. She seemed as if she would have said something to her sister, who had clasped her by the hand, but litherly swinging back-

ward, she laid her head down on her husband's 'threshold, and gave a heavy sigh, and died.'

CHAP. VIII.

THE burial of Marion Ruet was decently attended by Bailie Kilspinnie and all his family ; and though he did not carry the head himself, he yet ordered their eldest son to do so, because, whatever her faults had been, she was still the youth's mother. And my grandfather, with his wife, having spent some time after with their friends at Crail, returned homeward by themselves, passing over to Edinburgh, that they might taste once more of the elixir of salvation as dispensed by John Knox, who had been for some time in a complaining way, and it was by many thought that the end of his preaching was drawing nigh.

It happened that the dreadful tidings of the murder of the protestants in France, by the

command of "the accursed king," reached Edinburgh in the night before my grandfather and his wife returned thither; and he used to speak of the consternation that they found reigning in the city when they arrived there, as a thing very awful to think of. Every shop was shut, and every window closed; for it was the usage in those days, when death was in a house, to close all the windows, so that the appearance of the town was as if, for the obduracy of their idolatrous sovereign, the destroying angel had slain all the first-born, and that a dead body was then lying in every family.

There was also a terrifying solemnity in the streets; for, though they were as if all the people had come forth in panic and sad wonderment, many were clothed in black, and there was a funereal stillness,—a dismal sense of calamity that hushed the voices of men, and friends meeting one another, lifted their hands, and shuddering, passed by without

speaking. My grandfather saw but one, between Leith Wynd and the door of the house in the Lawnmarket where he proposed to lodge, that wore a smile, and it was not of pleasure, but of avarice counting its gains.

The man was one Hans Berghen, an armourer, that had feathered his nest in the raids of the war with the Queen Regent. He was a Norman by birth, and had learnt the tempering of steel in Germany. In his youth he had been in the Emperor's service, and had likewise worked in the arsenal of Venetia. Some said he was perfected in his trade by the infidel at Constantinopolis ; but, however this might be, no man of that time was more famous among roisters and moss-troopers for the edge and metal of his weapons, than that same blasphemous incomer, who thought of nothing but the greed of gain, whether by dule to protestant or papist ; so that the sight of his hard-favoured visage, blithened with satisfaction, was to my grand-

father, who knew him well by repute, as an omen of portentous aspect.

For two days the city continued in that dismal state, and on the third, which was Sabbath, the churches were so filled, that my grandmother, being then in a tender condition, did not venture to enter the High Kirk, where the Reformer was waited for by many thirsty and languishing souls from an early hour in the morning, who desired to hear what he would say concerning the dark deeds that had been done in France. She therefore returned to the Lawnmarket; but my grandfather worked his way into the heart of the crowd, where he had not long been, when a murmur announced that Master Knox was coming, and soon after he entered the kirk.

He had now the appearance of great age and weakness, and he walked with slow and tottering steps, wearing a virl of fur round his neck, and a staff in one hand; godlie Richie Ballanden, his man, holding him up

by the oxter. And when he came to the foot of the pulpit, Richie, by the help of another servant that followed with THE BOOK, lifted him up the steps into it, where he was seemingly so exhausted, that he was obligated to rest for the space of several minutes. No man who had never seen him before, could have thought that one so frail would have had ability to have given out even the psalm; but when he began the spirit descended upon him, and he was so kindled, that at last his voice became as awful as the thunders of wrath, and his arm was strengthened as with the strength of a champion's. The kirk dirdled to the foundations; the hearts of his hearers shook, till the earth of their sins was shaken clean from them; and he appeared in the whirlwind of inspiration, as if his spirit was mounting, like the prophet Elijah in a fiery chariot, immediately to the gates of heaven.

His discourse was of the children of Bethlehem slain by Herod, and he spoke of the dread-

ful sound of a bell and a trumpet heard suddenly in the midnight hour, when all were fast bound, and lying defenceless in the fetters of sleep. He described the dreadful knocking at the doors—the bursting in of men with drawn swords—how babies were harled by the arms from their mothers' beds and bosoms, and dashed to death upon the marble floors. He told of parents that stood in the porches of their houses, and made themselves the doors that the slayers were obliged to hew in pieces before they could enter in. He pictured the women flying along the street in the nakedness of the bedchamber, with their infants in their arms, and how the ruffians of the accursed king, knowing their prey by their cries, ran after them, caught the mother by the hair, and the bairn by the throat, and in one act flung the innocent to the stones and trampled out its life. Then he paused, and said, in a soft and thankful voice, that in the horrors of Bethlehem there was still much mer-

cy; for the idolatrous dread of Herod prompted him to slay but young children, whose blameless lives were to their weeping parents an assurance of their acceptance into heaven.

“What then,” he cried, “are we to think of that night, and of that king, and of that people, among whom, by whom, and with whom, the commissioned murderer twisted his grip in the fugitive old man’s grey hairs, to draw back his head that the knife might the surer reach his heart? With what eyes, being already blinded with weeping, shall we turn to that city where the withered hands of the grandmother were deemed as weapons of war by the strong and black-a-vised slaughterer; whose sword was owre vehemently used for a’ the feckless remnant of life it had to cut! But deaths like these were brief and blessed compared to other things—which, Heaven be praised, I have not the power to describe—and which, among this protestant congregation, I trust there is not one able to imagine—or who, try-

ing to conceive, describes but in dark and misty vision, the pains of mangled mothers ; babes, untimely and unquickened, cast on the dung-hills and into the troughs of swine ; of black-iron hooks fastened into the mouths, and riven through the cheeks of brave men, whose arms are tied with cords behind, as they are dragged into the rivers to drown, by those who durst not in fair battle endure the lightning of their eyes.—O, Herod !—Herod of Judea—thy name is hereafter bright, for in thy bloody business thou wast thyself no where to be seen. In the vouts and abysses of thy unstained palace, thou hidst thyself from the eye of history, and perhaps humanely sat covering thine ears with thy hands to shut out the sound of the wail and woe around thee.—But this Herod—let me not call him by so humane a name.—No : let all the trumpets of justice sound his own to everlasting infamy—Charles the Ninth of France ! And let his ambassador that is here aye yet,

yet to this time audaciously in this Christian land, let him tell his master, that sentence has been pronounced against him in Scotland; that the Divine vengeance will never depart from him or his house until repentance has ensued, and atonement been made in their own race; that his name will remain a blot—a blot of blood, a stain never to be effaced—a thing to be pronounced with a curse by all posterity; and that none proceeding from his loins shall ever enjoy his kingdom in peace.”

The preacher, on saying these prophetic words, paused, and with his eyes fixed upwards, he stood some time silent, and then, clasping his hands together, exclaimed, with fear and trembling upon him, “ Lord, Lord, thy will be done !”

Many thought that he had then received some great apocalypse; for it was observed of all men, that he was never after like the man he had once been, but highly and holily elevated above earthly cares and considerations,

saving those only of his ministry, and which he hastened to close: he was as one that 'no longer' had trust, portion, or interest in this temporal world, which in less than two months after he bade farewell and was translated to a better. Yes; to a better,—for assuredly, if there is ought in this life that may be regarded as the symbols of ineffectment to the inheritance of Heaven, the labours and ministration of John Knox were testimonies that he had verily received the yird and stane of an heritage on High.

CHAP. IX.

SHORTLY after my grandfather had returned with his wife to their quiet dwelling at Quharist on the Garnock side, he began, in the course of the winter following, to suffer an occasional pang in that part of his body which was damaged by the fall he got in rugging down the Virgin Mary out of her niche in the idolatrous abbey-kirk of Kilwinning, and the anguish of his suffering grew to such a head by Candlemas, that he was obligated to send for his old acquaintance, Dominick Callender, who had, after his marriage with the regenerate nun, settled as a doctor of physic in the godly town of Irvine. But for many a day all the skill and medicamenting of Doctor Callender did him little good, till Nature had, of her own accord, worked

out the root of the evil in the shape of a skinker of bone. Still, though the wound then closed, it never was a sound part, and he continued in consequence a lamiter for life. Yet were his days greatly prolonged beyond the common lot of man ; for he lived till he was ninety-one years, seven months, and four days old ; and his end at last was but a pleasant translation from the bodily to the spiritual life.

For some days before the close he was calm and cheerful, rehearsing to the neighbours that came to speer for him, many things like those of which I have spoken herein. Towards the evening a serene drowsiness fell upon him, like the snow that falleth in silence, and froze all his temporal faculties in so gentle a manner, that it could not be said he knew what it was to die ; being, as it were, carried, in the downy arms of sleep, to the portal door of Death, where all the pains and terrors that guard the same

were hushed, and stood mute around, as he was softly received in.

No doubt there was something of a providential design in the singular prolongation of such a pious and blameless life; for through it the possessor became a blessed mean of sowing, in the hearts of his children and neighbours, the seeds of those sacred principles, which afterwards made them stand firm in their religious integrity when they were so grievously tried. For myself I was too young, being scant of eight years when he departed, to know the worth of those precious things which he had treasured in the garner of his spirit for seed-corn unto the Lord; and, therefore, though I often heard him speak of the riddling wherewith that mighty husbandman of the Reformation, John Knox, riddled the truths of the gospel from the errors of papistry, I am bound to say, that his own exceeding venerable appearance, and the visions of past events, which the eloquence of

his traditions called up to my young fancy; worked deeper and more thoroughly into my nature, than the reasons and motives which guided and governed many of his other disciples. But, before proceeding with my own story, it is meet that I should still tell the courteous reader some few things wherein my father bore a part,—a man of very austere character, and of a most godly, though, as some said, rather of a stubbornly affection for the forms of worship which had been established by John Knox and the pious worthies of his times, he was withal a single-minded Christian, albeit more ready for a raid than subtile in argument. He had, like all who knew the old people his parents, a by-common reverence for them; and spoke of the patriarchs with whom of old the Lord was wont to hold communion, as more favoured of Him than David or Solomon, or any other princes or kings.

When he was very young, not passing, as

I have heard him often tell, more than six or seven years of age, he was taken, along with his brethren, by my grandfather, to see the signing, at Irvine, of the Covenant, with which, in the lowering time of the Spanish armada, King James, the son of Mary, together with all the Reformed, bound themselves in solemn compact to uphold the protestant religion. Afterwards, when he saw the country rise in arms, and heard of the ward and watch, and the beacons ready on the hills, his imagination was kindled with some dreadful conceit of the armada, and he thought it could be nothing less than some awful and horrible creature sent from the shores of perdition to devour the whole land. The image he had thus framed in his fears haunted him continually; and night after night he could not sleep for thinking of its talons of brass, and wings of thunder, and nostrils flaming fire, and the iron teeth with which it was to grind and gnash the bodies and bones

of all protestants, in so much, that his parents were concerned for the health of his mind, and wist not what to do to appease the terrors of his visions.

At last, however, the great Judith of the protestant cause, Queen Elizabeth of England, being enabled to drive a nail into the head of that Holofernes of the idolaters, and many of the host of ships having been plunged, by the right arm of the tempest, into the depths of the seas, and scattered by the breath of the storm, like froth over the ocean, it happened that, one morning about the end of July, a cry arose, that a huge galley of the armada was driven on the rocks at Pencorse; and all the shire of Ayr hastened to the spot to behold and witness her shipwreck and overthrow. Among others my grandfather, with his three eldest sons, went, leaving my father at home; but his horrors grew to such a passion of fear, that his mother, the calm and pious Elspa Ruet,

resolved to take him thither likewise, and to give him the evidence of his eyes, that the dreadful armada was but a navy of vessels like the ship which was cast upon the shore. By this prudent thought of her, when he arrived at the spot his apprehensions were soothed; but his mind had ever after a strange habitude of forming wild and wonderful images of every danger, whereof the scope and nature was not very clearly discerned, and which continued with him till the end of his days.

Soon after the death of my grandfather, he had occasion to go into Edinburgh anent some matter of legacy that had fallen to us, through the decease of an uncle of my mother, a bonnet-maker in the Canongate; and, on his arrival there, he found men's minds in a sore fever concerning the rash counsels wherewith King Charles the First, then reigning, was minded to interfere with the pure worship of God, and to enact a part

in the kirk of Scotland little short of the papistical domination of the Roman Antichrist. To all men this was startling tidings ; but to my father it was as an enormity, that fired his blood and spirit with the fierceness of a furnace. And it happened that he lodged with a friend of ours, one Janet Geddes, a most pious woman, who had suffered great molestation in her worldly substance, from certain endeavours for the restoration of the horns of the mitre, and the prelatie buskings with which that meddling and fantastical bodie, King James the Sixth, would fain have buskit and disguised the sober simplicity of gospel ordinances.

No two persons could be more heartily in unison upon any point of controversy, than was my worthy father and Janet Geddes, concerning the enormities that would of a necessity ensue from the papistical pretensions and unrighteous usurpation of King Charles ; and they sat crooning and lament-

ing together, all the Saturday afternoon and night, about the woes of idolatry that were darkening again over Scotland.

No doubt there was both reason and piety in their fears; but in the method of their sorrow, from what I have known of my father's earnest and simple character, I redde there might be some lack of the decorum of wisdom. But be this as it may, they keated the zeal of one another to a pitch of great fervour, and next morning, the Sabbath, they went together to the high kirk of St Giles to see what the power of an infatuated government would dare to do.

The kirk was filled to its uttermost bunkers; my father, however, got for Janet Geddes, she being an aged woman, a stool near the skirts of the pulpit; but nothing happened to cause any disturbance, till the godly Mr Patrick Henderson had made an end of the morning prayer, when he said, with tears in his eyes, with reference to the liturgy, which

was then to be promulgated, “ Adieu, good people, for I think this is the last time of my saying prayers in this kirk;” and the congregation being much moved thereat, many wept.

No sooner had Mr Henderson retired, than Master Ramsay, that horn of the beast, which was called the Dean of Edinburgh, appeared in the pulpit in the pomp of his abominations, and began to read the liturgy. At the first words of which Janet Geddes was so transported with indignation that, starting from her stool, she made it fly whirring at his head, as she cried—“ Villain, dost thou say the mass at my lug ?” Then such an uproar began, as had not been witnessed since the destruction of the idols ; the women screaming, and clapping their hands in terrification, as if the legions of the Evil One had been let loose upon them ; and the men crying aloud, “ Antichrist, antichrist ! down wi’ the pope !” and all exhortation to quiet them was drowned in the din.

Such was the beginning of those troubles in the church and state, so wantonly provoked by the weak and wicked policy of the first King Charles, and which in the end brought himself to an ignominious death; and such the cause of that Solemn League and Covenant, to which, in my green years, my father, soon after his return home, took me to be a party, and to which I have been enabled to adhere, with unerring constancy, till the glorious purpose of it has all been fulfilled and accomplished.

CHAP. X.

WHEN my father returned home, my mother and all the family were grieved to see his sad and altered looks. We gathered around him, and she thought he had failed to get the legacy, and comforted him, by saying they had hitherto fenn't without it, and so might they still do.

To her tender condolences he however made no answer ; but, taking a leathern bag, with the money in it, out of his bosom, he flung it on the table, saying, "What care I for this world's trash, when the ark of the Lord is taken from Israel?" which to hear daunted the hearts of all present. And then he told us, after some time, what was doing on the part of the King to bring in the worship of the Beast again; rehearsing, with many

circumstances, the consternation and sorrow and rage and lamentations that he had witnessed in Edinburgh.

I, who was the ninth of his ten children, and then not passing nine years old, was thrilled with an unspeakable fear; and all the dreadful things, which I had heard my grandfather tell of the tribulations of his time, came upon my spirit like visions of the visible scene, and I began to weep with an exceeding sorrow, insomuch that my father was amazed, and caressed me, and thanked Heaven that one so young in his house felt as a protestant child should feel in an epoch of such calamity.

It was then late in the afternoon, towards the gloaming, and having partaken of some refreshment, my father took the big Bible from the press-head, and, after a prayer uttered in great heaviness of spirit, he read a portion of the Revelations, concerning the vials and the woes, expounding the same like

a preacher ; and we were all filled with anxieties and terrors : some of the younger members trembled with the thought that the last day was surely at hand.

Next morning a sough and rumour of that solemn venting of Christian indignation which had been manifested at Edinburgh, having reached our country-side, and the neighbours hearing of my father's return, many of them came at night to our house to hear the news ; and it was a meeting that none present thereat could ever after forget :—well do I mind every thing as if it had happened but yestreen. I was sitting on a laigh stool at the fireside, between the chumley-lug and the gown-tail of old Nanse Snoddie, my mother's aunty, a godly woman, that in her eild we took care of ; and as young and old came in, the salutation was in silence, as of guests coming to a burial.

The first was Ebenezer Muir, an aged man, whose grandson stood many a blast in

the persecution of the latter days, both with the Blackcuffs and the bloody dragoons of the remorseless Graham of Claver. He was bent with the burden of time, and leaning on his staff, and his long white hair hung down from beneath his broad blue bonnet. He was one whom my grandfather held in great respect for the sincerity of his principles and the discretion of his judgment, and among all his neighbours, and nowhere more than in our house, was he considered a most patriarchal character.

“Come awa, Ebenezer,” said my father, “I’m blithe and I’m sorrowful to see you. This night we may be spar’t to speak in peace of the things that pertain unto salvation; but the day and the hour is not far off, when the flock of Christ shall be scattered and driven from the pastures of their Divine Master.”

To these words of affliction Ebenezer Muir made no response, but went straight to the

fireside, facing Nanse Snoddie, and sat down without speaking; and my father, then observing John Fullarton of Dykedivots coming in, stretched out his hand, and took hold of his, and drew him to sit down by his side.

They had been in a manner brothers from their youth upward: an uncle of John Fullarton's, by whom he was brought up, had been owner, and he himself had heired, and was then possessor of, the mailing of Dykedivot, beside ours. He was the father of four brave sons, the youngest of whom, a stapping of some thirteen or fourteen years, was at his back: the other three came in afterwards. He was, moreover, a man of a stout and courageous nature, though of a much-enduring temper.

"I hope," said he to my father, "I hope, Sawners, a' this straemash and hobbleshow that fell out last Sabbath in Embro' has been seen wi' the glamoured een o' fear, and that the King and government canna be sae far

left to themselves as to meddle wi' the ordinances of the Lord."

"I doot, I doot, it's owre true, John," replied my father in a very mournful manner; and while they were thus speaking, Nahum Chapelrig came ben. He was a young man, and his father being precentor and school-master of the parish, he had more lair than commonly falls to the lot of country folk; over and aboon this, he was of a spirity disposition, and both eydent and eager in whatsoever he undertook, so that for his years he was greatly looked up to amang all his acquaintance, notwithstanding a small spicin of conceit that he was in with himself.

On seeing him coming in, worthy Ebenezer Muir made a sign for him to draw near and sit by him; and when he went forward, and drew in a stool, the old man took hold of him by the hand, and said, "Ye're weel come, Nahum;" and my father added, "Ay, Nahum Chapelrig, it's fast coming to pass,

as ye hae been aye saying it would ; the King hasna restit wi' putting the prelates upon us."

"What's te prelates, Robin Fullarton?" said auld Nanse Snoddie, turning round to John's son, who was standing behind his father.

"They're the red dragons o' unrighteousness," replied the sincere laddie with great vehemence.

"Gude guide us!" cried Nanse with the voice of terror; "and has the King daur't to send sic accursed things to devour God's people?"

But my mother, who was sitting behind me, touched her on the shoulder, bidding her be quiet; for the poor woman, being then doited, when left to the freedom of her own will, was apt to expatiate without ceasing on whatsoever she happened to discourse anent; and Nahum Chapelrig said to my father—

"'Deed, Sawners Gilhaize, we could look for nae better; prelacy is but the prelude o'

papistry : but the papistry o' this prelude is a perilous papistry indeed ; for its roots of rankness are in the midden-head of Arminianism, which, in a sense, is a greater Antichrist than Antichrist himself, even where he sits on his throne of thralldom in the Roman vaticano. But, nevertheless, I trust and hope, that though the virgin bride of protestantism be for a season thrown on her back, she shall not be overcome, but will so strive and warsle aneath the foul grips of that rampant Arminian, the English high-priest Laud, that he shall himself be cast into the mire, or choket wi' the stoure of his own bakiefu's of abominations, wherewith he would overwhelm and bury the Evangil. Yea, even though the shield of his mighty men is made red, and his valiant men are in scarlet, he shall recount his worthies, but they shall stumble in their walk."

While Nahum was thus holding forth, the house filled even to the trance-door with the

neighbours, old and young ; and several from time to time spoke bitterly against the deadly sin and aggression which the King was committing in the rape that the reading of the liturgy was upon the consciences of his people. At last Ebenezer Muir, taking off his bonnet, and rising, laid it down on his seat behind him, and then resting with both his hands on his staff, looked up,—and every one was hushed. Truly it was an affecting sight to behold that very aged, time-bent, and venerable man so standing in the midst of all his dismayed and pious neighbours,—his grey hairs flowing from his haffets,—and the light of our lowly hearth shining upon his bald head and reverent countenance.

“ Friends,” said he, “ I hae lived lang in the world ; and in this house I hae often partaken the sweet repast of the conversations of that sanctified character, Michael Gilhaize, whom we a’ revered as a parent, not more for his ain worth than for the great things to

which he was a witness in the trials and troubles of the Reformation ; and it seems to me, frae a' the experience I hae gatherit, that when ance kings and governments hae taken a step, let it be ne'er sae rash, there's a something in the nature of rule and power that winna let them confess a fau't, though they may afterwards be constrained to renounce the evil of their ways. It was therefore wi' a sore heart that I heard this day the doleful tidings frae Embro', and moreover, that I hae listened to the outbreathings this night of the heaviness wherewith the news hae oppressed you a'. Sure am I, that frae the provocation given to the people of Scotland by the King's miscounselled majesty, nothing but tears and woes can ensue ; for by the manner in which they hae already rebutted the aggression, he will in return be stirred to aggrieve them still farther. I'm now an auld man, and may be removed before the woes come to pass ; but it requires not the

e'e of prophecy to spae bloodshed, and suffering, and many afflictions in your fortunes. Nevertheless, friens, be of good cheer, for the Lord will prosper his own cause. Neither king, nor priest, nor any human authority, has the right to interfere between you and your God; and allegiance ends where persecution begins. Never, therefore, in the trials awaiting you, forget, that the right to resist in matters of conscience is the foundation-stone of religious liberty; O see, therefore, that you guard it weel!"

The voice and manner of the aged speaker melted every heart. Many of the women sobbed aloud, and the children were moved, as I was myself, and as I have often heard them in their manhood tell, as if the spirit of faith and fortitude had entered into the very bones and marrow of their bodies; nor ever afterwards have I heard psalm sung with such melodious energy of holiness as that pious congregation of simple country folk

sung the hundred and fortieth Psalm before departing for their lowly dwellings on that solemn evening.

CHAP. XI.

It was on the Wednesday that my father came home from Edinburgh. On Friday the farmer lads and their fathers continued coming over to our house to hear the news, and all their discourse was concerning the manifest foretaste of papistry which was in the praying of the prayers, that an obdurate prince and an alien Arminian prelate were attempting to thrust into their mouths, and every one spoke of renewing the Solemn League and Covenant, which, in the times of the Reformation and the dangers of the Spanish Armada, had achieved such great things for THE TRUTH AND THE WORD.

On Saturday, Mr Sundrum, our minister, called for my father about twelve o'clock. He had heard the news, and also that my father had come back. I was doing something on

the green, I forget now what it was, when I saw him coming towards the door, and I ran into the house to tell my father, who immediately came out to meet him.

Little passed in my hearing between them, for, after a short inquiry concerning how my father had fared in the journey, the minister took hold of him by the arm, and they walked together into the fields ; where, when they were at some distance from the house, Mr Sundrum stopped, and began to discourse in a very earnest and lively manner, frequently touching the palm of his left hand with the fingers of his right, as he spoke to my father, and sometimes lifting both his hands as one in amaze, ejaculating to the heavens.

While they were thus reasoning together, worthy Ebenezer Muir came towards the house, but, observing where they were, he turned off and joined them, and they continued all three in vehement deliberation, in so much, that I was drawn by the thirst of cu-

riosity to slip so near towards them, that I could hear what passed ; and my young heart was pierced at the severe terms in which the minister was condemning the ringleaders of the riot, as he called the adversaries of popedom in Edinburgh, and in a manner rebuking my honest father as a sower of sedition.

My father, however, said stiffly, for he was not a man to controvert with a minister, that in all temporal things he was a true and leil subject, and in what pertained to the King as king, he would stand as stoutly up for as any man in the three kingdoms. But against a usurpation of the Lord's rights, his hand, his heart, and his father's sword, that had been used in the Reformation, were all alike ready.

Old Ebenezer Muir tried to pacify him, and reasoned in great gentleness with both, expressing his concern that a presbyterian minister could think that the attempt to bring in prelacy, and the reading of court-contrived prayers, was not a meddling with things

sacred and rights natural, which neither prince nor potentate had authority to do. But Mr Sundrum was one of those that longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and the fat things of a lordly hierarchy; and the pacific remonstrances of the pious old man made him wax more and more wroth at what he hatefully pronounced their rebellious inclinations; at which bitter words both my father and Ebenezer Muir turned from him, and went together to the house with sadness in their faces, leaving him to return the way he had come alone, a thing which filled me with consternation, he having ever before been treated and revered as a pastor ought always to be.

What comment my father and the old man made on his conduct, when they were by themselves, I know not; but on the Sabbath morning the kirk was filled to overflowing, and my father took me with him by the hand, and we sat together on the same form with Ebenezer Muir, whom we found in the church before us.

When Mr Sundrum mounted into the pulpit, and read the psalm, and said the prayer, there was nothing particular; but when he prepared to preach, there was a rustle of expectation among all present; for the text he chose was from Romans, chap. xiii. and verse 1 and 2; from which he made an endeavour to demonstrate, as I heard afterwards, for I was then too young to discern the matter of it myself, the duty and advantages of passive obedience—and, growing warm with his un-gospel rhetoric, he began to rail and to daud the pulpit, in condemnation of the spirit which had kithed in Edinburgh.

Ebenezer Muir and my father tholed with him for some time; but at last he so far forgot his place and office, that they both rose and moved towards the door. Many others did the same, and presently the whole congregation, with the exception of a very few, also began to move, so that the kirk skayled; and from that day, so long as Mr Sundrum

continued in the parish, he was as a leper and an excommunicant.

Meanwhile the alarm was spreading far and wide, and a blessed thing it was for the shire of Ayr, though it caused its soil to be soaked with the blood of martyrs, that few of the ministers were like the time-serving Mr Sundrum, but trusty and valiant defenders of the green pastures whereon they had delighted, like kind shepherds, to lead their confiding flocks, and to cherish the young lambs thereof with the tender embraces of a holy ministry. Among the rest, that godly and great saint, Mr Swinton of Garnock, our neighbour-parish, stood courageously forward in the gap of the broken fence of the vineyard, announcing, after a most weighty discourse, on the same day on which Mr Sundrum preached the erroneous doctrine of passive obedience, that next Sabbath he would administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, not knowing how long it might be in the power of his

people to partake of it. Every body around accordingly prepared to be present on that occasion, and there was a wonderful congregation. All the adjacent parishes in succession did the same thing Sabbath after Sabbath, and never was there seen, in the memory of living man, such a zealous devotion and strictness of life as then reigned throughout the whole West Country.

At last the news came, that it was resolved among the great and faithful at Edinburgh to renew the Solemn League and Covenant; and the ministers of our neighbourhood having conferred together concerning the same, it was agreed among them, that the people should be invited to come forward on a day set apart for the purpose, and that as the kirk of Irvine was the biggest in the vicinage, the signatures both for the country and that town should be received there. Mr Dickson the minister, than whom no man of his day was more brave in the Lord's cause, accord-

ingly made the needful preparation, and appointed the time.

In the meanwhile the young men began to gird themselves for war. The swords that had rested for many a day were drawn from their idle places ; and the women worked together, that their brothers and their sons might be ready for the field ; but at their work, instead of the ancient lilt, they sung psalms and godly ballads. However, as I mean not to enter upon the particulars of that awakening epoch, but only to show forth the pure and the holy earnestness with which the minds of men were then actuated, I shall here refer the courteous reader to the annals and chronicles of the time,—albeit the truth in them has suffered from the alloy of a base servility.

CHAP. XII.

THE sixteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord 1638, was appointed for the renewal, at Irvine, of the Solemn League and Covenant. On the night before, my five elder brothers, who were learning trades at Glasgow and Kilmarnock, came home that they might go up with their father to the house of God, in order to set down their names together; me and my four sisters, the rest of his ten children, were still biding with our mother and him at the mailing.

From my grandfather's time, there had been a by-common respect among the neighbours for our family on his account; and that morning my brother Jacob, who happened to be the first that went, at break of day, to the door, was surprised to see many of the

cotters and neighbouring farmer lads already assembled on the lone, waiting to walk with us to the town, as a token of their reverence for the principles and the memory of that departed worthy; and they were all belted and armed with swords like men ready for battle.

Seeing such a concourse of the neighbours, instead of making exercise in the house, my father, as the morning was bright and down, bade me carry the Bible and a stool to the dykeside, that our friends might have room to join us in worship,—which I did accordingly, placing the stool under the ash-tree at the corner of the stack-yard, and by all those who were present on that occasion the spot was ever afterwards regarded as a hallowed place. Truly there was a scene and a sight there not likely to be soon forgotten; for the awful cause that had brought together that meeting was a thing which no man who had a part therein could ever in all his days forget.

My father chose the lxxvi. Psalm, and when it was sung, he opened the Scriptures in Second Kings, and read aloud, with a strong voice, the xxiii. chapter, and every one likened Josiah to the old King, and Jehoahaz to his son Charles, by whose disregard of the Covenant the spirit of the land was then in such tribulation; and at the conclusion, instead of kneeling to pray, as he was wont, my father stood up, and, as if all temporal things were then of no account, he only supplicated that the work they had in hand for that day might be approved and sanctified.

The worship being over, the family returned into the house, and having partaken of a repast of bread and milk, my father put on his father's sword, and my brothers, who had brought weapons of their own home with them, also belted themselves for the road. I was owre young to be yet trysted for war, so my father led me out by the hand, and walking forward, followed by my brothers,

the neighbours, two and two, fell into the rear, and the women, in their plaids, came mournful and in tears at some short distance behind.

As we were thus proceeding towards the main road, we heard the sound of a drum and fife, and saw over the hedge of the lane that leads to the clachan, a white banner waving aloft, with the words " SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT" painted thereon; at the sight of which my father was much disturbed, saying,—“ This is some silly device of Nahum Chapelrig, that, if we allow to proceed, may bring scoff and scorn upon the cause as we enter the town;” and with that, dropping my hand, he ran forward and stopped their vain bravery; for it was, as he had supposed, the work of Nahum, who was marching, like a man-of-war, at the head of his band. However, on my father's remonstrance, he consented to send away his sounding instruments and idle banner, and to walk composedly along with us.

As we reached the town-end port, we fell in with a vast number of other persons, from different parts of the country, going to sign the Covenant, and, on a cart, worthy^e Ebenezer Muir and three other aged men like himself, who, being all of our parish, it was agreed that they should alight and walk to the kirk at the head of those who had come with^e my father. While this was putting in order, other men and lads belonging to the parish came and joined us, so that, to the number of more than a hundred, we went up the town together.

When we arrived at the tolbooth, we were obligated, with others, to halt for some time, by reason of the great crowd at the Kirkgate-foot waiting to see if the magistrates, who were then sitting in council, would come forth and go to the kirk ; and the different crafts and burghesses, with their deacons, were standing at the Cross in order to follow them, if they determined, in their public capacity,

to sign the Covenant, according to the pious example which had been set to all in authority by the magistrates and town-council of Edinburgh three days before. We had not, however, occasion to be long detained; for it was resolved, with a unanimous heart, that the provost should sign in the name of the town, and that the bailies and counsellors should, in their own names, sign each for himself; so they came out, with the town-officers bearing their battle-axes before them, and the crafts, according to their privilege, followed them to the kirk.

The men of our parish went next; but on reaching the kirk-yard yett, it was manifest that, large as the ancient fabric was, it would not be able to receive a moitié of the persons assembled. Godly Mr David Dickson, the minister, had, however, provided for this; and on one of the old tombs on the south side of the kirk, he had ordered a table and chair to be placed, where that effectual preacher,

Mr Livingstone, delivered a great sermon,—around him the multitude from the country parishes were congregated ; but my father being well acquainted with Deacon Auld of the wrights, was invited by him to come into his seat in the kirk, where he carried me in with him, and we heard Mr Dickson himself.

Of the strain and substance of his discourse I remember nothing, save only the earnestness of his manner ; but well do I remember the awful sough and silence that was in the kirk when, at the conclusion of the sermon, he prepared to read the words of the Covenant.

“ Now,” said he, when he had come to the end, and was rolling it up, “ as no man knoweth how long, after this day, he may be allowed to partake of the sacrament of the Supper, the elders will bring forward the elements ; and it is hoped that sisters in Christ will not come to communion till the brethren are served, who, as they take their seats at the Lord’s table, are invited to sign their names to this

solemn charter of the religious rights and liberties of God's people in Scotland."

He then came down from the pulpit with the parchment in his hand, and going to the head of the sacramental table, he opened it again, and laid it down over the elements of the bread and wine which the elders had just placed there; and a minister, whose name I do not well recollect, sitting at his right hand, holding an inkstand, presented him with a pen, which, when he had taken, he prayed in silence for the space of a minute, and then, bending forward, he signed his name; having done so, he raised himself erect and said, with a loud voice, holding up his right hand, "Before God and these witnesses, in truth and holiness, I have sworn to keep this Covenant." At that moment a solemn sound rose from all the congregation, and every one stood up to see the men, as they sat at the table, put down their names.

CHAP. XIII.

From the day on which the Covenant was signed, though I was owre young to remember the change myself, I have heard it often said, that a great alteration took place in the morals and manners of the Covenanters. The Sabbath was observed by them with far more than the solemnity of times past; and there was a strictness of walk and conversation among them, which showed how much in sincerity they were indeed regenerated Christians. The company of persons inclined to the prelatic sect was eschewed as contagious, and all light pastimes and gayety of heart were suppressed, both on account of their tendency to sinfulness, and because of the danger with which the Truth and the Word were threatened by the Arminian Antichrist of the King's government.

But the more immediate effect of the renewal of the Solemn League and Covenant was the preparation for defence and resistance, which the deceitful policy of that false monarch, King Charles the First, taught every one to know would be required. The men began to practise firing at butts and targets, and to provide themselves with arms and munitions of war; while, in order to maintain a life void of offence in all temporal concerns, they were by ordinarie obedient and submissive to those in authority over them, whether holding jurisdiction from the King, or in virtue of baronies and ffeudalities.

In this there was great wisdom; for it left the sin of the provocation still on the heads of the King and his evil counsellors, in so much that even, when the General Assembly, holden at Glasgow, vindicated the independence and freedom of Christ's kingdom, by continuing to sit in despite of the dissolution pronounced by King Charles' commis-

sioner, the Marquis Hamilton, and likewise by decreeing the abolition of prelacy as an abomination, there was no political blame where-with the people, in their capacity of subjects to their earthly prince, could be wyted or brought by law to punishment.

In the meantime, the King, who was as fey as he was false, mustered his forces, and his rampant high-priest, Laud, was, with all the voices of his prelatic emissaries, inflaming the honest people of England to wage war against our religious freedom. The papistical Queen of Charles was no less busy with the priesthood of her crafty sect, and aids and powers, both of men and money, were raised wherever they could be had, in order to reinstall the discarded episcopacy of Scotland.

The Covenanters however were none daunted, for they had a great ally in the Lord of hosts; and, with Him for their captain, they neither sought nor wished for any alien assist-

ance, though they sent letters to their brethren in foreign parts, exhorting them to unite in the Covenant, and to join them for the battle. General Lesly, in Gustavus Adolphus' army, was invited by his kinsman, the Lord Rothes, to come home, that, if need arose, he might take the temporal command of the Covenanters.

The King having at last, according to an ancient practice of the English monarchs, when war in old times was proclaimed against the Scots, summoned his nobles to attend him with their powers at York, the Covenanters girded their loins, and the whole country rung with the din of the gathering of an host for the field.

One Captain Bannerman, who had been with Lesley in the armies of Gustavus, was sent from Edinburgh to train the men in our part; and our house being central for the musters of the three adjacent parishes, he staid a night in the week with us at

Quharist for the space of better than two months, and his military discourse greatly instructed our neighbours in the arts and stratagems of war.

He was an elderly man, of a sedate character, and had gone abroad with an uncle from Montrose when he was quite a youth. In his day he had seen many strange cities, and places of wonderful strength to withstand the force of sieges. But, though bred a soldier, and his home in the camp, he had been himself but seldom in the field of battle. In appearance he was tall and lofty, and very erect and formal; a man of few words, but they were well chosen; and he was patient and pains-taking; of a contented aspect, somewhat hard-favoured, and seldom given to smile. To little children he was, however, bland and courteous; taking a pleasure in setting those that were of my age in battle-array, for he had no pastime, being altogether an instructive soldier; or, as William, my

third brother, used to say, who was a free out-spoken lad, Captain Bannerman was a real dominie o' war.

Besides him, in our country-side, there was another officer, by name Hepburn, who had also been bred with the great Gustavus, sent to train the Covenanters in Irvine; but he was of a more mettlesome humour, and lacked the needful douceness that became those who were banding themselves for a holy cause; so that when any of his disciples were not just so list and brisk as they might have been, which was sometimes the case, especially among the weavers, he thought no shame, even on the Golf-fields, before all the folk and onlookers, to curse and swear at them, as if he had been himself one of the King's cavaliers, and they no better than ne'erdoweels receiving the wages of sin against the Covenant. In sooth to say, he was a young man of a disorderly nature, and about seven months after he left the town twa mis-

fortunate creatures gave him the wyte of their bairns.

Yet, for all the regardlessness of his ways and moral conduct, he was much beloved by the men he had the training of; and, on the night before he left the town, lies were told of a most respectit and pious officer of the town's power, if he did not find the causey owre wide when he was going home, after partaking of Captain Hepburn's pay-way supper. But how that may have been is little of my business at present to investigate; for I have only spoken of Hepburn, to notify what happened in consequence of a brag he had with Bannerman, anent the skill of their respective disciples, the which grew to such a controversy between them, that nothing less would satisfy Hepburn than to try the skill of the Irvine men against ours, and the two neighbouring parishes of Garnock and Stoneyholm. Accordingly a day was fixt for that purpose, and the Craiglands-croft

was the place appointed for this probation of soldiership.

On the morning of the appointed day the country folk assembled far and near, and Nahum Chapelrig, at the head of the lads of his clachan, was the first on the field. The sight to my young eyes was as the greatest show of pageantry that could be imagined; for Nahum had, from the time of the covenanting, been gathering arms and armour from all quarters, and had thereby not only obtained a glittering breastplate for himself, but three other coats of mail for the like number of his fellows; and when they were coming over the croft, with their fife and drum, and the banner of the Covenant waving aloft in the air, every one ran to behold such splendour and pomp of war; many of the women, that were witnesses among the multitude, wept at such an apparition of battles dazzling our peaceful fields.

My father, with my five brothers, headed

the Covenanters of our parish. There was no garnish among that band. They came along with austere looks and douce steps, and their belts were of tanned leather. The hilts of many of their swords were rusty, for they had been the weapons of their forefathers in the raids of the Reformation. As my father led them to their station on the right flank of Nahum Chapelrig's array, the crowd of onlookers fell back, and stood in silence as they passed by.

Scarcely had they halted, when there was a rushing among the onlookers, and presently the townsmen, with Hepburn on horseback, were seen coming over the brow of the Gowan-brae. They were scant the strength of the country folk by more than a score; but there was a band of sailor-boys with them that made the number greater; so that, when they were all drawn up together forenent the countrymen, they were more than man for man.

It is not to be suppressed nor denied, that, in

the first show of the day, Hepburn got far more credit and honour than old sedate Bannerman; for his lads were lighter in the heel, glegger in the eye, and brisker in the manoeuvres of war: moreover, they were all far more similiar in their garb and appearance, which gave them a seeming compactness that the countrymen had nothing like. But when the sham contest began, it was not long till Bannerman's disciples showed the proofs of their master's better skill to such a mark, that Hepburn grew hot, and so kindled his men by reproaches, that there was like to have been fighting in true earnest; for the blood of the country folk was also rising. Their eyes grew fierce, and they muttered through their teeth.

Old Ebenezer Muir, who was among the multitude, observing that their blood was heating, stepped forward, and lifting up his hand, cried, "Sirs, stop;" and both sides instantanly made a pause. "This maunna

be," said he. "It may be sport to those who are by trade soldiers to try the mettle o' their men, but ye're a covenanted people, obligated by a grievous tyranny to quit your spades and your looms only for a season; therefore be counselled, and rush not to battle till need be, which may the Lord yet prevent."

Hepburn uttered an angry ban, and would have turned the old man away by the shoulder; but the combatants saw they were in the peril of a quarrel, and many of them cried aloud, "He's in the right, and we're playing the fool for the diversion o' our adversaries." So the townsmen and the country folk shook hands; but instead of renewing the contest, Captain Bannerman proposed that they should all go through their discipline together, it being manifest that there were little odds in their skill, and none in their courage. The which prudent admonition pacified all parties, and the remainder of the day was

spent in cordiality and brotherly love. Towards the conclusion of the exercises, worthy Mr Swinton came on the field; and when the business of the day was over, he stepped forward, and the trained men being formed around him, the onlookers standing on the outside, he exhorted them in prayer, and implored a blessing on their covenanted union, which had the effect of restoring all their hearts to a religious frame and a solemnity befitting the spirituality of their cause.

CHAP. XIV.

ONE night, about a month after the ploy whereof I have spoken in the foregoing chapter, just as my father had finished the worship, and the family were composing themselves round the fireside for supper, we were startled by the sound of a galloping horse coming to the door ; and before any one had time to open it, there was a dreadful knocking with the heft of the rider's whip. It was Nahum Chapelrig, who being that day at Kilmarnock, had heard, as he was leaving the town, the cry get up there, that the Aggressor was coming from York with all the English power, and he had flown far and wide on his way home publishing the dismal tidings.

My father, in a sober manner, bade him alight and partake of our supper, questioning

him sedately anent what he had heard ; but Nahum was raised, and could give no satisfaction in his answers ; he however leapt from his horse, and, drawing the bridle through the ring at the door-cheek, came ben to the fire where we had all so shortly before been harmoniously sitting. His eyes were wide and wild ; his hair, with the heat he was in, was as if it had been pomated ; his cheeks were white, his lips red, and he panted with haste and panic.

“ They’re coming,” he cried, “ in thousands o’ thousands ; never sic a force has crossed the border since the day o’ Flodden Field. We’ll a’ either be put to the sword, man, woman, and child, or sent in slavery to the plantations.”

“ No,” replied my father, “ things are no just come to that pass ; we have our swords yet, and hearts and hands to use them.”

The consternation, however, of Nahum Chapelrig that night was far ayont all coun-

sel ; so, after trying to sooth and reason him into a more temperate frame, my father was obligated to tell him, that since the battle was coming so near our gates, it behoved the Covenanters to be in readiness for the field, advising Nahum to go home, and be over with him betimes in the morning.

While they were thus speaking, James Newbigging also came to the door with a rumour of the same substance, which his wife had brought from Eglinton Castle, where she had been with certain cocks and hens, a servitude of the Eglintons on their mailing ; so that there was no longer any dubiety about the news, though matters were not in such a desperate condition as Nahum Chapelrig had terrified himself with the thought of. Nevertheless the tidings were very dreadful ; and it was a judgment-like thing to hear that an appointed king was so far left to himself as to be coming with wrath, and banners, and trampling war-horses, to destroy his subjects for the

sincerity of their religious allegiance to that Almighty Monarch, who has but permitted the princes of the earth to be set up as idols by the hands of men.

James Newbigging, as well as Nahum, having come ben to the fireside, my father called for the Books again, and gave out the eight first verses of the forty-fourth Psalm, which we all sung with hearts in holy unison and zealous voices.

When James Newbigging and Nahum Chapelrig were gone away home, my father sat for some time exhorting us, who were his youngest children, to be kind to one another, to cherish our mother, and no to let auld doited aunty want, if it was the Lord's will that he should never come back from the battle. The which to hear caused much sorrow and lamentation, especially from my mother, who, however, said nothing, but took hold of his hand and watered it with her tears. After this he walked out into the fields, where he remained some time alone; and during his

absence, me and the three who were next to me were sent to our beds ; but, young as we then were, we were old enough to know the danger that hung over us, and we lay long awake, wondering and woful with fear.

About two hours after midnight the house was again startled by another knocking, and on my father inquiring who was at the door, he was answered by my brother Jacob, who had come with Michael and Robin from Glasgow to Kilmarnock, on hearing the news, and had thence brought William and Alexander with them to go with their father to the war. For they had returned to their respective trades after the day of the covenanting, and had only been out at Hepburn's raid, as the ploy with the Irvinemen was called in jocularity, in order that the neighbours, who venerated their grandfather, might see them together as Covenanters.

The arrival of her sons, and the purpose they had come upon, awakened afresh the

grief of our mother ; but my father entreated us all to be quiet, and to compose ourselves to rest, that we might be the abler on the morn to prepare for what might then ensue. Yet, though there was no sound in the house, save only our mother's moaning, few closed their eyes ; and long before the sun every one was up and stirring, and my father and my five brothers were armed and belted for the march.

Scarcely were they ready, when different neighbours in the like trim came to go with them ; presently also Nahum Chapelrig, with his banner, and fife, and drum, at the head of some ten or twelve lads of his clachan, came over ; and on this occasion no obstacle was made to that bravery, which was thought so uncomely on the day of the covenanting.

While the armed men were thus gathering before our door, with the intent of setting forward to Glasgow, as the men of the West had been some time before trysted to do, by orders from General Lesley, on the first alarm, that

godly man and minister of righteousness, the Reverend Mr Swinton, made his appearance with his staff in his hand, and a satchel on his back, in which he carried the Bible.

“ I am come, my frien’s,” said he, “ to go with you. Where the ensigns of Christ’s Covenant are displayed, it is meet that the very lowest of his vassals should be there ;” and having exhorted the weeping women around to be of good cheer, he prayed for them and for their little children, whom the Aggressor was perhaps soon to make fatherless. Nahum Chapelrig then exalted his banner, and the drum and fife beginning to play, the venerable man stepped forward, and heading the array with his staff in his hand, they departed amidst the shouts of the boys, and the loud sorrow of many a wife and mother.

“ I followed them, with my companions, till they reached the high road, where, at the turn that led them to Glasgow, a great concourse of other women and children belonging

to the neighbouring parishes were assembled, having there parted from their friends. They were all mourning and weeping, and mingling their lamentations, with bitter predictions against the King and his evil counsellors; but seeing Mr Swinton, they became more composed; and he having made a sign to the drum and fife to cease, he stopped, and earnestly entreated them to return home and employ themselves in the concerns of their families, which, the heads being for a season removed, stood the more in need of all their kindness and care.

This halt in the march of their friends brought the onlookers, who were assembled round our house, running to see what was the cause; and, among others, it gave time to the aged Ebenezer Muir to come up, whom Mr Swinton no sooner saw, than he called on him by name, and bade him comfort the women, and invite them away from the high road, where their presence could only increase the natural

grief that every covenanted Christian, in passing to join the army, could not but suffer, on seeing so many left defenceless by the unprovoked anger of the Aggressor. He then bade the drum again beat, and the march being resumed, the band of our parish soon went out of sight.

While our men continued in view Ebenezer Muir said nothing; but as soon as they had disappeared behind the brow of the Gowanbrae, he spoke to the multitude in a gentle and paternal manner, and bade them come with him into the neighbouring field and join him in prayer; after which, he hoped they would see the wisdom of returning to their homes. They accordingly followed him, and he having given out the twenty-third Psalm, all present joined him, till the lonely fields and silent woods echoed to the melody of their pious song.

As we were thus standing around the old man in worship and unison of spirit, the Ir-

vine men came along the road ; and seeing us, they hushed their drums as they passed by, and bowed down their banners in reverence and solemnity. Such was the outset of the worthies of the renewed Covenant, in their war with the first Charles.

CHAP. XV.

AFTER my father and brothers, with our neighbours that went with them, had returned from the bloodless raid of Dunse Law, as the first expedition was called, a solemn thanksgiving was held in all the country-side ; but the minds of men were none pacified by the treaty concluded with the King at Berwick. For it was manifest to the world, that coming in his ire, and with all the might of his power, to punish the Covenanters as rebels, he would never have consented to treat with them on any thing like equal terms, had he not been daunted by their strength and numbers ; so that the spirit awakened by his Ahab-like domination continued as alive and as distrustful of his word and pactions as ever.

After the rumours of his plain juggling

about the verbals of the stipulated conditions and his arbitrary prorogation of the parliament at Edinburgh, a thing which the best and bravest of the Scottish monarchs had never before dared to do without the consent of the States then assembled, the thud and murmur of warlike preparation was renewed both on anvil and in hall. And when it was known that the King, fey and distempered with his own weak conceits and the instigations of cruel counsellors, had, as soon as he heard that the Covenanters were disbanded, renewed his purposes of punishment and oppression, a gurl of rage, like the first brush of the tempest on the waves, passed over the whole extent of Scotland, and those that had been in arms fiercely girded themselves again for battle.

As the King's powers came again towards the borders, the Covenanters, for the second time, mustered under Lesley at Dunse ; but far different was this new departure of our

men from the solemnity of their first expedition. Their spirits were now harsh and angry, and their drums sounded hoarsely on the breeze. Godly Mr Swinton, as he headed them again, struck the ground with his staff, and, instead of praying, said, “It is the Lord’s pleasure, and he will make the Aggressor fin’ the weight of the arm of flesh. Honest folk are no ever to be thus obligated to leave their fields and families by the provocations of a prerogative that has so little regard for the people. In the name and strength of God, let us march.”

With six and twenty thousand horse and foot Lesley crossed the Tweed, and in the first onset the King’s army was scattered like chaff before the wind. When the news of the victory arrived among us, every one was filled with awe and holy wonder; for it happened on the very day which was held as a universal fast throughout the land; on that day likewise, even in the time of worship,

the castle of Dumbarton was won, and the covenanted Earl of Haddington repelled a wasteful irruption from the garrison of Berwick.

Such disasters smote the King with consternation ; for the immediate fruit of the victory was the conquest of Newcastle, Tyne-mouth, Shields, and Durham.

Baffled and mortified, humbled but not penitent, the rash and vindictive Monarch, in a whirlwind of mutiny and desertion, was obligated to retreat to York, where he was constrained, by the few sound and sober-minded that yet hovered around him, to try the effect of another negotiation with his insulted and indignant subjects. But as all the things which thence ensued are mingled with the acts of perfidy and aggression by which, under the disastrous influence of the fortunes of his doomed and guilty race, he drew down the vengeance of his English subjects, it would lead me far from this household memorial to enter more at large on circumstances so notour, though

they have been strangely palliated by the supple spirit of latter times, especially by the sordid courtliness of the crafty Clarendon. I shall therefore skip the main passages of public affairs, and hasten forward to the time when I became myself enlisted on the side of our national liberties, briefly however noticing, as I proceed, that after the peace which was concluded at Ripon my father and my five brothers came home. None of them received any hurt in battle ; but in the course of the winter the old man was visited with a great income of pains and aches, in so much that, for the remainder of his days, he was little able to endure fatigue or hardship of any kind ; my second brother, Robin, was therefore called from his trade in Glasgow to look after the mailing, for I was still too young to be of any effectual service ; Alexander continued a bonnet-maker at Kilmarnock ; but Michael, William, and Jacob, joined and fought with the forces that won the

mournful triumph of Marstonmoor, where fifty thousand subjects of the same King and laws contended with one another, and where the Lord, by showing himself on the side of the people, gave a dreadful admonition to the government to recant and conciliate while there was yet time.

Meanwhile the worthy Mr Swinton, having observed in me a curiosity towards books of history and piety, had taken great pains to instruct me in the rights and truths of religion, and to make it manifest alike to the ears and eyes of my understanding, that no human authority could, or ought to dictate in matters of faith, because it could not discern the secrets of the breast, neither know what was acceptable to Heaven in conduct or in worship. He likewise expounded to me in what manner the Covenant was not a temporal but a spiritual league, trenching in no respect upon the natural and contributed authority of the kingly office. But, owing to the infirm state

of my father's health, neither my brother Robin nor I could be spared from the farm, in any of the different raids that germinated out of the King's controversy with the English parliament; so that in the whigamore expedition, as it was profanely nicknamed, from our shire, with the covenanted Earls of Cassilis and Eglinton, we had no personality, though our hearts went with those that were therein.

When, however, the hideous tidings came of the condemnation and execution of the King, there was a stop in the current of men's minds, and as the waters of Jordan when the ark was carried in, rushed back to their fountain-head, every true Scot on that occasion felt in his heart the ancient affections of his nature returning with a compassionate horror. Yet even in this they were true to the Covenant; for it was not to be hidden that the English parliament, in doing what it did in that tragical event, was guided by a speculative spirit of political innovation and change,

different and distinct, both in principle and object, from the cause which made our Scottish Covenanters have recourse to arms. In truth, the act of bringing kings to public condign punishment was no such new thing in the chronicles of Scotland, as that brave historian, George Buchanan, plainly shows, to have filled us with such amazement and affright, had the offences of King Charles been proven as clearly personal, as the crimes for which the ancient tyrants of his pedigree suffered the death :—but his offences were shared with his counsellors, whose duty it was to have bridled his arbitrary pretensions. He was in consequence mourned as a victim, and his son, the second Charles, at once proclaimed and acknowledged King of Scotland. How he deported himself in that capacity, and what gratitude he and his brother showed the land for its faith and loyalty in the wreck and desperation of their royal fortunes, with a firm and a fearless pen I now purpose to show.

But as the tale of their persecutions is ravelled with the sorrows and the sufferings of my friends and neighbours, and the darker tissue of my own woes, it is needful, before proceeding therein, that I should entreat the indulgence of the courteous reader to allow a few short passages of my private life now to be here recorded.

CHAP. XVI.

SOME time before the news of King Charles' execution reached us in the West, the day had been set for my marriage with Sarah Lochrig; but the fear and consternation which the tidings bred in all minds, many dreading that the event would be followed by a total breaking up of the union and frame of society, made us consent to defer our happiness till we saw what was ordained to come to pass.

When, however, it was seen and felt that the dreadful beheading of an anointed monarch as a malefactor, had scarcely more effect upon the tides of the time than the death of a sparrow,—and that men were called as usual to their daily tasks and toils,—and that all things moved onward in their accustomed courses,—and that laws and jurisdictions, and all the wonted pacts and processes of community be-

tween man and man, suffered neither molestation nor hindrance, godly Mr Swinton bestowed his blessing on our marriage, and our friends their joyous countenance at the wedding feast.

My lot was then full of felicity, and I had no wish to wander beyond the green valley where we established our peaceful dwelling. It was in a lown holm of the Garnock, on the lands of Quharist, a portion of which my father gave me in tack; and Sarah's father likewise bestowed on us seven rigs, and a cow's grass of his own mailing, for her tocher, as the beginning of a plenishment to our young fortunes. Still, like all the neighbours, I was deeply concerned about what was going on in the far-off world of conflicts and negotiations; and this was not out of an idle thirst of curiosity, but from an interest mingled with sorrows and affections; for, after the campaign in England, my three brothers, Michael, William, and Alexander, never domiciled them-

selves at any civil calling. Having caught the roving spirit of camps, they remained in the skirts of the array which the covenanted Lords at Edinburgh continued to maintain; and here, poor lads! I may digress a little, to record the brief memorials of their several unhappy fates.

When King Charles the Second, after accepting and being sworn to abide by the Covenant, was brought home, and the crown of his ancient progenitors placed upon his head at Scoone, by the hands of the Marquis of Argyle, in the presence of the great and the godly Covenanters, my brothers went in the army that he took with him into England. Michael was slain at the battle of Worcester, by the side of Sir John Shaw of Greenock, who carried that day the royal banner. Alexander was wounded in the same fight, and left upon the field, where he was found next morning by the charitable inhabitants of the city, and carried to the house of a loyal gentlewoman, one Mrs Deerhurst, that

treated him with much tenderness ; but after languishing in agony, as she herself wrote to my father, he departed this life on the third day.

Of William I have sometimes wished that I had never heard more ; for after the adversity of that day, it would seem he forgot the Covenant and his father's house. Ritchie Minigaff, an old servant of the Lord Eglington's, when the Earl his master was Cromwell's prisoner in the Tower of London, saw him there among the guard, and some years after the Restoration he met him again among the King's yeomen at Westminster, about the time of the beginning of the persecution. But Willy then begged Ritchie, with the tear in his eye, not to tell his father ; nor was ever the old man's heart pierced with the anguish which the thought of such backsliding would have caused, though he often wondered to us at home, with the anxiety of a parent's wonder, what could have become of blithe light-

hearted Willy. No doubt he died in the servitude of the faithless tyrant; but the storm that fell among us, soon after Ritchie had told me of his unfortunate condition, left us neither time nor opportunity to inquire about any distant friend. But to return to my own story.

From my marriage till the persecution began, I took no part in the agitations of the times. It is true, after the discovery of Charles Stuart's perfidious policy, so like his father's, in corresponding with the Marquis of Montrose for the subjection of Scotland by the tyranny of the sword, at the very time he was covenanting with the commissioners sent from the Lords at Edinburgh with the offer of the throne of his ancestors, that with my father and my brother Robin, together with many of our neighbours, I did sign the Remonstrance against making a prince of such a treacherous and unprincipled nature king. But in that we only delivered reasons and opinions on a mat-

ner of temporal expediency ; for it was an instrument that neither contained nor implied obligation to arm ; indeed our deportment bore testimony to this explanation of the spirit in which it was conceived and understood. For when the prince had received the crown and accepted the Covenant, we submitted ourselves as good subjects. Fearing God, we were content to honour in all rights and prerogatives, not contrary to Scripture, him whom, by His grace in the mysteries of His wisdom, He had, for our manifold sins as a nation and a people, been pleased to ordain and set over us for king. And verily no better test of our sincerity could be, than the distrust with which our whole countryside was respected by Oliver Cromwell, when he thought it necessary to build that stronghold at Ayr, by which his Englishers were enabled to hold the men of Carrick, Kyle, and Cunningham in awe,—a race that, from the days of Sir William Wallace and King

Robert the Bruce, have ever been found honest in principle, brave in affection, and dauntless and dour in battle. But it is not necessary to say more on this head; for full of griefs and grudges as were the hearts of all true Scots, with the thought of their country in southern thralldom, while Cromwell's Englishers held the upper hand amongst us, the season of their dominion was to me and my house as a lown and pleasant spring. All around me was bud, and blossom, and juvenility, and gladness, and hope. My lot was as the lot of the blessed man. I ate of the labour of my hands, I was happy, and it was well with me; my wife, as the fruitful vine that spreads its clusters on the wall, made my lowly dwelling more beautiful to the eye of the heart, than the golden palaces of crowned kings, and our pretty bairns were like olive plants round about my table;—but they are all gone. The flood and the flame have passed over them;—yet be still, my heart;

a little while endure in silence ; for I have not
taken up the avenging pen of history, and
dipped it in the blood of martyrs, to record
only my own particular woes and wrongs

CHAP. XVII.

It has been seen, by what I have told concerning the part my grandfather had in the great work of the Reformation, that the heads of the house of Argyle were among the foremost and the firmest friends of the resuscitated Evangil. The aged Earl of that time was in the very front of the controversy as one of the Lords of the Congregation ; and though his son, the Lord of Lorn, hovered for a season, like other young men of his degree, in the purlieus and precincts of the Lady Regent's court, yet when her papistical counsels broke the paction with the protestants at Perth, I have rehearsed how he, being then possessed of the inheritance of his father's dignities, did, with the bravery

becoming his blood and station, remonstrate with her Highness against such impolitic craft and perfidy, and, along with the Lord James Stuart, utterly eschew her presence and method of government.

After the return of Queen Mary from France, and while she manifested a respect for the rights of her covenanted people, that worthy Earl was among her best friends; and even after the dismal doings that led to her captivity in Lochleven Castle, and thence to the battle of Langside, he still acted the part of a true nobleman to a sovereign so fickle and so faithless. Whether he rued on the field that he had done so, or was smitten with an infirmity that prevented him from fighting against his old friend and covenanted brother, the good Regent Murray belongs not to this history to inquire; but certain it is, that in him the protestant principles of his honourable house suffered no dilapidation; and in the person of his grandson, the first

marquis of the name, they were stoutly asserted and maintained.

When the first Charles, and Laud, that un-venous Arminian Antichrist, attempted to subvert and abrogate the presbyterian gospel worship, not only did the Marquis stand forth in the van of the Covenanters to stay the religious oppression then meditated against his native land, but laboured with all becoming earnestness to avert the pestilence of civil war. In that doubtless Argyle offended the false counsellors about the King; but when the English parliament, with a lawless arrogance, struck off the head of the miscounselled and bigoted monarch, faithful to his covenants and the loyalty of his race, the Marquis was among the foremost of the Scottish nobles to proclaim the Prince of Wales king. With his own hands he placed on Charles the Second's head the ancient diadem of Scotland. Surely it might therefore have been then supposed, that all previous offence against the

royal family was forgotten and forgiven ; yea, when it is considered that General Monk himself, the boldest in the cause of Cromwell's usurpation, was rewarded with a dukedom in England for doing no more for the King there than Argyle had done for him before in greater peril here, it could not have entered into the imagination of Christian men, that Argyle, for only submitting like a private subject to the same usurped authority when it had become supreme, would, after the Restoration, be brought to the block. But it was so ; and though the machinations of political enemies converted that submission into treasons to excuse their own crime, yet there was not an honest man in all the realm that did not see in the doom of Argyle a dismal omen of the cloud and storm which so soon after burst upon our religious liberties.

Passing, however, by all those afflictions which took the colour of political animosities, I hasten to speak of the proceedings which,

from the hour of the Restoration, were hatched for the revival of the prelatic oppression. The tyranny of the Stuarts is indeed of so fell a nature, that, having once tasted of blood in any cause, it will return again and again, however so often baffled, till it has either devoured its prey, or been itself mastered: and so it showed in this instance. For, regardless of those troubles which the attempt of the first Charles to exercise an authority in spiritual things beyond the rights of all earthly sovereignty caused to the realm and to himself, the second no sooner felt the sceptre in his grip, than he returned to the same enormities; and he found a fit instrument in James Sharp, who, in contempt of the wrath of God, sold himself to Antichrist for the prelacy of St Andrews.

But it was not among the ambitious and mercenary members of the clergy that the evidences of a backsliding generation were alone to be seen: many of the people, nobles,

and magistrates, were infected with the sin of the same reprobation ; and, in verity, it might have been said of the realm, that the restoration of King Charles the Second was hailed as an advent ordained to make men forget all vows, sobriety, and solemnities. It is, however, something to be said in commendation of the constancy of mind and principle of our West country folk, that the immorality of that drunken loyalty was less outrageous and offensive to God and man among them, and that although we did submit, and were commanded to commemorate the anniversary of the King's restoration, it was nevertheless done with humiliation and anxiety of spirit. But a vain thing it would be of me to attempt to tell the heartburning with which we heard of the manner that the Covenant, and of all things which had been hallowed and honourable to religious Scotland, were treated in the town of Lithgow on that occasion, although all of my grandfather's stock knew, that from of old it

was a seat and sink of sycophancy, alien to holiness, and prone to lick the dust ~~aneath~~ the feet of whomsoever ministered to the corruption abiding there.

Had the general inebriation of the kingdom been confined only to such mockers as the papistical progeny of the unregenerate town of Lithgow, we might perhaps have only grieved at the wantonness of the world ; but they were soon followed by more palpable enormities. Middleton, the King's commissioner, coming on a progress to Glasgow, held a council of state there, at which was present the apostate Fairfoul, who had been shortly before nominated Archbishop of that city ; and at his wicked incitement, Middleton, in a fit of actual intoxication from strong drink, let loose the blood-hounds of persecution, by that memorable act of council, which bears the date of the 1st of October 1662,—an anniversary that ought ever to be held as a solemn fast in Scotland, if such

things might be ; for by it all the ministers that had received Gospel ordination from and after the year forty-nine, and who still refused to bend the knee to Baal, were banished, with their families, from their kirks and manses.

But to understand in what way that wicked act, and the blood-causing proclamation which ensued, came to take effect, it is needful, before proceeding to the recital, to bid the courteous reader remember the preaching of the doctrine of passive obedience by our time-serving pastor, Mr Sundrum, and how the kirk was deserted on that occasion ; because, after his death, which happened in the forty-nine, godly Mr Swinton became our chosen pastor, and being placed and inducted according to the apostolic ordination of Presbytery, fell of course, like many of his Gospel brethren, under the ban of the aforesaid proclamation, of which some imperfect sough and rumour reached us on the Friday after it was framed.

At first the particulars were not known,

for it was described as the muttering of unclean spirits against the purity of the Truth; but the tidings startled us like the growl of some unknown and dreadful thing, and I dreamt that night of my grandfather, with his white hair and the comely venerableness of his great age, appearing pale and sorrowful in a field before me, and pointing with a hand of streaming light to horsemen, and chariots, and armies with banners, warring together on the distant hills.

Saturday was then the market-day at Irvine, and though I had but little business there, I yet went in with my brother Robin, chiefly to hear the talk of the town. In this I but partook of the common sympathy of the whole country-side; for, on entering the town-end port, we found the concourse of people there assembled little short of the crowd at Marymas fair, and all eager to learn what the council held at Glasgow had done; but no one could tell. Only it was known,

that the Earl of Eglinton, who had been present at the council, was returned home to the castle, and that he had sent for the provost that morning on very urgent business.

While we were thus all speaking and marvelling one with another, a cry got up that a band of soldiers was coming into the town from Ayr ; the report of which, for the space of several minutes, struck every one with awe and apprehension. And scarcely had the sough of this passed over us, when it was told that the provost had privately returned from Eglinton Castle by the Gallows-knowes to the backsides, and that he had sent for the minister and the bailies, with others of the council, to meet him in the clerk's chamber.

No one wist what the meaning of such movements and mysteries could be ; but all boded danger to the fold and flock, none doubting that the wolves of episcopalian covetousness were hungering and thirsting for the blood of the covenanted lambs. Nor were

we long left to our guesses ; for, soon after the magistrates and the minister had met, a copy of the proclamation of the council held at Glasgow was put upon the tolbooth door, by which it was manifested to every eye that the fences of the vineyard were indeed broken down, and that the boar was let in, and wrathfully trampling down and laying waste.

CHAP. XVIII.

THE proclamation was as a stunning blow on the forehead of the Covenanters; and for the next two Sabbaths Mr Swinton was plainly in prayer a weighed down and sorrowful-hearted man, but he said nothing in his discourses that particularly affected the marrow of that sore and solemn business. On the Friday night, however, before the last Lord's day of that black October, he sent for my brother, who was one of his elders, and told him that he had received a mandatory, for conformity to the proclamation, and to acknowledge the prelatie reprobation that the King's government had introduced into the church; but that it was his intention, strengthened of the Lord, to adhere to his vows and covenants,

even to the uttermost, and not to quit **his** flock, happen what would.

“ The beild of the kirk and the manse, said he, “ being temporalities, are **aneath the** power and regulation of the earthly monarch; but in the things that pertain to the allegiance I owe to the King of kings, I will act, with His heartening, the part of a true and loyal vassal.”

This determination being known throughout the parish, and the first of November being the last day allowed for conforming, on the Sabbath preceding we had a throng kirk and a solemneezed congregation. According to their wonted custom, the men, before the hour of worship, assembled in the kirk-yard, and there was much murmuring and marveling among us, that nobody in all the land would stand forth to renew the Covenant, as was done in the year thirty-eight; and we looked around and beheld the green graves of many friends that had died since the great day

of the covenanting, and we were ashamed of ourselves and of our time, and mourned for the loss of the brave spirits which, in the darkness of his mysterious wisdom, the Lord had taken away.

The weather, for the season, was bright and dry ; and the withered leaf still hung here and there on the tree, so that old and young, the infirm and the tender, could come abroad ; and many that had been bed-ridden were supported along by their relations to hear the word of Truth, for the last time, preached in the house of God.

Mr Swinton came, followed by his wife and family. He was, by this time, a man well stricken in years, but Mrs Swinton was of a younger generation ; and they had seven children,—Martha, the eldest, a fine lassie, was not passing fourteen years of age. As they came slowly up the kirk-stile, we all remarked that the godly man never lifted his eyes from the ground, but came along

perusing, as it were, the very earth for consolation.

The private door which, at that epoch, led to the minister's seat and the pulpit, was near to where the bell-rope hung on the outer wall, and as the family went towards it, one of the elders stepped from the plate at the main door to open it. But after Mrs Swinton and the children were gone in, the minister, who always stopped till they had done so, instead of then following, paused and looked up with a compassionate aspect, and laying his hand on the shoulder of old Willy Shackle, who was ringing the bell, he said—

“ Stop, my auld frien',—they that in this parish need a bell this day to call them to the service of their Maker, winna come on the summons o' yours.”

He then walked in; and the old man, greatly affected, mounted the stool, and tied up the rope to the ring in the wall in his usual manner, that it might be out of the reach of

the school weans. “ But,” said he, as he came down, “ I needna fash ; for after this day little care I wha rings the bell : since it’s to be consecrat to the wantonings o’ prelacy, I wis the tongue were out o’ its mouth and its head cracket, rather than that I should live to see’t in the service of Baal and the hoor o’ Babylon.”

• After all the congregation had taken their seats, Mr Swinton rose and moved towards the front of the pulpit, and the silence in the church was as the silence at the martyrdom of some holy martyr. He then opened THE BOOK, and having given out the ninety-fourth Psalm, we sang it with weeping souls ; and during the prayer that followed there was much sobbing and lamentations, and an universal sorrow. His discourse, was from the fifth chapter of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, verse first, and first clause of the verse ; and with the tongue of a prophet, and the voice of an apostle, he foretold, as things already

written in the chronicles of the kingdom, many of those sufferings which afterwards came to pass. It was a sermon that settled into the bottom of the hearts of all that heard it, and 'prepared us for the woes of the vial that was then pouring out.

At the close of the discourse, when the precentor rose to read the remembering prayer, old Ebenezer Muir, then upwards of fourscore and thirteen, who had been brought into the church on a barrow by two of his grandsons, and was, for reason of his deafness, in the bench with the elders, gave him a paper, which, after rehearsing the names of those in distress and sickness, he read, and it was "The persecuted kirk of SCOTLAND."

"If I forget thee, O Jerusalem ! let my right hand forget her cunning," cried Mr Swinton at the words, with an inspiration that made every heart dirl ; and surely never was such a prayer heard as that with which he followed up the divine words.

Then we sang the hundred and fortieth Psalm; at the conclusion of which the minister came again to the front of the pulpit, and with a calm voice, attuned to by ordinaré solemnity, he pronounced the blessing; then, suddenly turning himself, he looked down to his family and said, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” And he covered his face with his hands, and sat down and wept.

Never shall I forget the sound which rose at that sight; it was not a cry of woe, neither was it the howl of despair, nor the sob of sorrow, nor the gurl of wrath, nor the moan of anguish, but a deep and dreadful rustling of hearts and spirits, as if the angel of desolation in passing by had shaken all his wings.

The kirk then began to skail; and when the minister and his family came out into the kirk-yard, all the heads of families present, moved by some sacred instinct from on high,

followed them with one accord to the manse, like friends at a burial, where we told them, that whatever the Lord was pleased to allow to ourselves, a portion would be set apart for his servant. I was the spokesman on that occasion, and verily do I think, that as I said the words, a glorious light shone around me, and that I felt a fanning of the inward life, as if the young cherubims were present among us, and fluttering their wings with an exceeding great joy at the piety of our kind intents.

So passed that memorable Sabbath in our parish; and here I may relate, that we had the satisfaction and comfort to know, in a little time thereafter, that the same Christian faithfulness, with which Mr Swinton adhered to his gospel-trusts, and character, was maintained on that day by more than three hundred other ministers, to the perpetual renown of our national worth and covenanted cause. And therefore, though it was an era of much sorrow and of many tears, it was thus, through

the mysterious ways of Providence, converted into a ground of confidence in our religion, in so much, that it may be truly said, out of the ruins and the overthrow of the first presbyterian church the Lord built up among us a stronghold and sanctuary for his truth and law.

CHAP. XIX.

Nothing particular happened till the second week of November, when a citation came from Irvine, commanding the attendance of Mr Swinton, on a suffragan of Fairfoul's, under the penalties of the proclamation. In the meantime we had been preparing for the event; and my father having been some time no more, and my brother with his family in a house of their own, it was settled between him and me, that I should take our mother into mine, in order that the beild of Quharist might be given up to the minister and his houseless little ones; which all our neighbours much commended; and there was no slackness on their part in making a provision to supply the want of his impounded stipend.

As all had foreseen, Mr Swinton, for not

appearing to the citation, was pronounced a non-conformist; and the same night, after dark, a party of the soldiers, that were marched from Ayr into Irvine on the day of the proclamation, came to drive him out of the manse.

There was surely in this a needless and exasperating severity, for the light of day might have served as well; but the men were not to blame, and the officer who came with them, having himself been tried in the battles of the Covenant, and being of a humane spirit, was as meek and compassionate in his tyrannical duty as could reasonably be hoped for. He allowed Mrs Swinton to take away her clothes, and the babies, that were asleep in their beds, time to be awakened and dressed; nor did he object to their old ploughman, Robin Harrow, taking sundry articles of provision for their next morning's repast; so that, compared with the lewd riots and rampageous insolence of the troopers in other places, we had great reason to be thankful for

the tenderness with which our minister and his small family of seven children were treated on that memorable night.

It was about eight o'clock, when Martha, the eldest daughter, came flying to me like a demented creature, crying the persecutors were come, with naked swords and dreadful faces ; and she wept and wrung her hands, thinking they were then murdering her parents and brothers and sisters. I did, however, all that was in my power to pacify her, saying, our lots were not yet laid in blood ; and leaving her to the consolatory counsellings of my wife, I put on my bonnet, and hastened over to the manse.

The night was troubled and gusty. The moon was in her first quarter, and wading dim and low through the clouds on the Arran hills. A far off, the bars of Ayr, in their roaring, boded a storm, and the stars were rushing through a swift and showery south-west carry. The wind, as it hissed over the stub-

ble, sounded like the whisperings of desolation; and I was thrice startled in my walk by passing shapes and shadows, whereof I could not discern the form.

At a short distance from the manse door, I met the godly sufferer and his destitute family, with his second youngest child in his arms; Mrs Swinton had their baby at her bosom, and the other four poor terrified helpless creatures were hirpling at their sides, holding them by the skirts, and often looking round in terror, dreading the persecutors, by whom they were in that dismal and inclement night so cast upon the mercy of the elements. But He that tempers the wind to the shorn lamb was their protector.

“ You see, Ringan Gilhaize,” said the minister, “ how it fares with them in this world whose principles are at variance with the pretensions of man. But we are mercifully dealt by—a rougher manner and a harder heart, in the agent of persecution that has driven us

from house and home, I had laid my account for ; therefore, even in this dispensation, I can see the gentle hand of a gracious Master, and I bow the head of thankfulness."

While we were thus speaking, and walking towards Quharist, several of the neighbours, who had likewise heard the alarm of what had thus come to pass, joined us on the way ; and I felt within myself, that it was a proud thing to be able to give refuge and asylum to an aged gospel minister and his family in such a time and on such a night.

We had not been long in the house, when a great concourse of his friends and people gathered around, and among others, Nahum Chapelrig, who had been some time his father's successor in the school. But all present were molested and angry with him, for he came in battle-array, with the sword and gun that he had carried in the raids of the civil war, and was bragging of valorous things then needful to be done.

“ Nahum Chapelrig,” said the Worthy to him with severity, “ this is no conduct for the occasion. It would hae been a black day for Scotland had her children covenanted themselves for temporal things. No, Nahum; if the prelatie reprobation now attempted on the kirk gang nae farther than outing her ministers from their kirks and manses, it maust be tholet; so look to it, that ye give not the adversary cause to reproach us with longing for the flesh-pots of Egypt when we are free to taste of the heavenly manna. I redde ye, therefore, Nahum Chapelrig, before these witnesses, to unbuckle that belt of war, and lay down thae weapons of offence. The time of the shield and banner may come owre soon upon us. Let us not provoke the smiter, lest he draw his sword against us, and have law and reason on his side. Therefore, I say unto thee, Peter, put up thy sword.”

The zealous dominie, being thus timeously rebuked, unharnished himself, and the minis-

ter having returned thanks for the softness with which the oppression was let down upon him, and for the pious affection of his people, we returned home to our respective dwellings.

But though by this Christian submission the power of cruelty was at that time rendered innocent towards all those who did as Mr Swinton had done, we were, nevertheless, not allowed to remain long unvisited by another swirl of the rising storm. Before the year was out, Fairfoul, the Glasgow antichrist, sent upon us one of the getts that prelacy was then so fast adopting for her sons and heirs. A lang, thin, bare lad he was, that had gotten some spooning of two of pagan philosophy at college, but without solid meal of learning, nor, were we to judge by his greedy gaping, even a satisfactory meal of victuals. His name was Andrew Dornock ; and, poor fellow, being eschewed among us on account of his spiritual leprosy, he drew up with divers loose characters, that were nae overly nice of their company.

This made us dislike him more and more, in so much, that, like others of his nature and calling, he made sore and secret complaints of his parishioners to his mitred master ; representing, for aught I ken to the contrary, that, instead of believing the Gospel according to Charles Stuart, we preferred that of certain four persons, called Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, of whom, it may be doubted, if he, poor man, knew more of than the names. But be that as it may, to a surety he did grievously yell and cry, because we preferred listening to the gospel melody of Mr Swinton under a tree to his feckless havers in the kirk ; as if it was nae a more glorious thing to worship God in the freedom and presence of universal Nature, beneath the canopy of all the heavens, than to bow the head in the fetters of episcopal bondage below the stoury rafters of an auld bigging, such as our kirk was, a perfect howf of cloks and spiders. Indeed, for that matter, it was said, that the only sensible thing

Andrew Dornock ever uttered from the pulpit was, when he first rose to speak therein, and which was caused by a spider, that just at the moment lowered itself down into his mouth "O Lord," cried the curate, "we're puzhened wi' speeders!"

CHAP. XX.

It might have been thought, considering the poor hand which the prelatie curates made of it in their endeavours to preach, that they would have set themselves down content with the stipend, and allowed the flocks to follow their own shepherds in peace; but their hearts were filled with the bitterness of envy at the sight of the multitudes that went forth to gather the manna in the fields, and their malice was exasperated to a wonderful pitch of wickedness, by the derision and contempt with which they found themselves regarded. No one among them all, however, felt this envy and malice more stirring within him, than did the arch-apostate James Sharp; for the faithfulness of so many ministers was a

terror and a reproach to his conscience and apostacy, and made him labour with an exceeding zeal and animosity to extirpate so many evidences of his own religious guilt. Accordingly, by his malignant counsellings, edicts and decrees came out against our tabernacle in the wilderness, and, under the opprobrious name of conventicles, our holy meetings were made prohibited offences, and our ministers subjected to pains and penalties, as sowers of sedition.

It is a marvellous thing to think of the madness with which the minds of those in authority at that time were kindled; first, to create causes of wrong to the consciences of the people, and afterwards to enact laws for the natural fruit of that frantic policy. The wanton imposition of the prelatic oppression begat our field-preachings, and the attempts to disperse us by the sword brought on resistance. But it belongs not to me and my story to treat of the folly of a race and go-

vernment, upon whom a curse was so manifestly pronounced; I shall therefore return from this generality to those particulars wherein I was myself a witness or a sufferer.

During the greater part of the year after the banishment of Mr Swinton from the manse and kirk, we met with little molestation; but from time to time rumours came over us like the first breathings of the cold blasts in autumn, that forerun the storms of winter. All thoughts of innocent pastimes and pleasures passed away, like the yellow leaves that fall from the melancholy trees; and there was a heaviness in the tread, and a solemnity in the looks of every one, that showed how widely the shadows of coming woes were darkening the minds of men.

But though the Court of Commission, which the apostate James Sharp procured to be established for the cognizance of those who refused to acknowledge the prelatie usurpation, was, in its proceedings, guided by as little

truth or principle as the Spanish inquisition, the violence and tyranny of its awards fell less on those of my degree than on the gentry and it was not till the drunkard Turner was appointed general of the West country that our personal sufferings began.

The curates furnished him with lists of recusants; and power having been given unto him to torment men for many days, he was as remorseless as James Sharp's own Court in the fines which he levied, and in eating the people up, by sending his men to live upon them at free quarters, till the fines were paid.

In our neighbourhood we were for some time gently dealt with; for the colonel, who, at Ayr, had the command under Turner, was of a humane spirit, and for a season, though the rumour of the oppressions in Dumfriesshire and Galloway, where the drunkard himself reigned and ruled, dismayed and troubled us beyond utterance, we were still permitted

to taste of the gospel pastures with our own faithful shepherd.

But this was a blessing too great in those days to be of a continuance to any flock. The mild and considerate gentleman, who had softened the rigour of the prelatie rage, was removed from his command, and in his place came certain cruel officers, who, like the serpents that were sent among the children of Israel in the desert, defiled our dwellings, and afflicted many of us even unto death. The change was the more bitterly felt, because it was sudden, and came upon us in an unexpected manner, of which I will here set down some of the circumstantial.

According to the usage among us, from the time when Mr Swinton was thrust from the ministry, the parish had assembled, on the third Lord's day of May, in the year 1665, under the big sycamore-tree at Zachariah Smylie's gable, and which has ever since been revered by the name of the Poopit Tree. A cart

served him for the place of lecture and exhortation; and Zachariah Smylie's daughter, Rebecca Armour, a godly widow, who resided with him, had, as her custom was in fine weather, ordered and arranged all the stools and chairs in the house, with the milk and washing-boynes upside down, around the ~~corn~~ as seats for the aged. When the day was wet or bleak, the worship was held in the barn; but on this occasion the morning was lown and the lift clear, and the natural quietude of the Sabbath reigned over all the fields. We had sung a portion of the psalm, and the harmonious sound of voices and spirits in unison was spreading into the tranquil air, as the pleasant fragrancy of flowers diffuses itself around, and the tune, to which we sung the divine inspiration, was the sweet and solemn melody of the Martyrs.

Scarcely, however, had we proceeded through the second verse, when Mr Swinton, who was sitting on a stool in the cart, with his back to the house, started up, and said,

“ Christians, dinna be disheartened, but I think I see yonder the glimmerin’ of spears coming atween the hedges.”

At these words we all rose alarmed, and, on looking round, saw some eight or ten soldiers, in the path leading from the high-road, coming towards us. The children and several of the women moved to run away, but Mr Swinton rebuked their timerarious fear, and said—

“ O ! ye of little faith, wherefore are ye thus dismayed ? Let us put our trust in Him, who is mightier than all the armies of all the kings of all the earth. We are here doing homage to Him, and He will protect His true vassals and faithful people. In his name, therefore, Christians, I charge you to continue His praises in the psalm ; for in His strength I will, to the end of my intent, this day fulfil the word and the admonition ; yea, even in the very flouting of the adversary’s banner.”

The vehemence of Elijah was in his voice ;

we resumed our former postures; and he himself leading on the psalm, we began to sing anew in a louder strain, for we were fortified and encouraged by his holy intrepidity. No one moved as it were an eyelid; the very children were steadfast; and all looked towards the man of God as he sat in his humble seat, serene, and more awful than ever was Solomon on the royal throne of the golden lions, arrayed in all his glory.

The rough soldiers were struck for a time with amazement at the religious bravery with which the worshipping was continued, and they halted as they drew near, and whispered together, and some of them spoke as if the fear of the Lord had fallen upon them. During the whole time that we continued singing, they stood as if they durst not venture to disturb us; but when the psalm was finished, their sergeant, a lewd roister, swore at them, and called on them to do their duty.

The men then advanced, but with one

accord we threw ourselves in between them and the cart, and cried to Mr Swinton to make his escape; he however rose calmly from his seat and said—

“Soldiers, shed no blood; let us finish our prayer,—the worst of men after condemnation are suffered to pray,—ye will, therefore, ~~not~~ surely refuse harmless Christians the boon that is alloo’t to malefactors. At the conclusion I will go peaceably with you, for we are not rebels; we yield all bodily obedience to the powers that be, but the upright mind will not bend to any earthly ordinance.—Our bodies are subject to the King’s authority, and to you, as his servants, if ye demand them, we are ready to deliver them up.”

But the sergeant told him harshly to make haste and come down from the cart. Two of the men then went into the house, and brought out the churn and bread and cheese, and with much ribaldry began to eat and

drink, and to speak profane jests to the young women. But my brother interposed, and advised all the women and children to return to their homes. In the meantime, Zachariah Smylie had gone to the stable and saddled his horse, and Rebecca Armour had made a small providing of provisions for Mr Swinton to take with him to the tolbooth of Irvine ; for thither the soldiers were intending to carry him that night, in order that he might be sent to Glasgow next day with other sufferers. When, however, the horse was brought out, and the godly man was preparing to mount, the sergeant took him by the sleeve, and pulled him back, saying, " The horse is for me."

Verily at this insult I thought my heart would have leapt out ; and every one present gurled and growled ; but the soldiers laughed at seeing the sergeant on horseback. Mr Swinton, however, calmly advised us to make no obstacle : " Good," said he, " will come of

this, and though for a season we are ordained to tribulation, and to toil through the slough of despond, yet a firm footing and a fair and green path lies in a peaceful land beyond."

The soldiers then took him away, the blasphemous sergeant riding, like a Merry Andrew, on Zachariah Smylie's horse before them, and almost the whole congregation following with mournful and heavy hearts.

CHAP. XXI.

THE testimony of the regard and respect which we showed to Mr Swinton in following him to the prison-door, was wickedly reported against us as a tumult and riot, wearing the aspect of rebellion; and accordingly, on the second day after he was sent from Irvine to Glasgow, a gang of Turner's worst troopers came to live at heck and manger among us. None suffered more from those ruthless men than did my brother's house and mine; for our name was honoured among the true and faithful, and we had committed the unpardonable sin against the prelacy of harbouring our minister and his destitute family, when they were driven from their home in a wild and wintry night.

We were both together, with old Zachariah Smylie, fined each in a heavy sum.

Thinking that by paying the money down we should rid ourselves and our neighbours of the presence and burden of the devouring soldiery, our friends, to enable us, made a gathering among them, and brought us the means, for we had not a sufficiency of our own. But this, instead of mitigating the oppression, became a reason with the officer set over us to persecute us still more; for he pretended to see in that neighbourliness the evidences of a treasonous combination; so that he not only took the money, but made a pretext of the readiness with which it was paid to double his severity. Sixteen domineering camp-reprobates were quartered on four honest families, and five of them were on mine.

What an example their conduct and conversation was at my sober hearth I need not attempt to describe. For some days they rampaged as if we had been barbarians, and the best in the house was not good enough

for their ravenous wastrie;—but I was resolved to keep a uniform and steady abstinence from all cause of offence. So seeing they were passing from insolence into a strain of familiarity towards my wife and her two servant-lasses, we gave up the house and made our abode in the barn.

This silent rebuke for some time was not without a wholesome effect; and in the end they were so far tamed into civility by our blameless and peaceful demeanour, that I could discern more than one of them beginning to be touched with the humanity of respect for our unmerited punishment. But their officer, Lieutenant Swaby, an Englisher by birth, and a sinner by education, was of an incorrigible depravity of heart. He happened to cast his eye on Martha Swinton, the minister's eldest daughter, then but in her sixteenth year, and notwithstanding the sore affliction that she was in, with her mother, on account of her godly father's uncertain fate, he spared no strata-

gem to lure her to his wicked will. She was, however, strengthened against his arts and machinations ; but her fortitude, instead of repressing the rigour of his persecutions, only made him more audacious, in so much that she was terrified to trust herself unguarded out of the house,—and the ire of every man and woman was rising against the sensual Swaby, who was so destitute of grace and human charity. But out of this a mean was raised, that in the end made him fain to be removed from among us.

For all the immoral bravery of the rampant ~~soldiers~~ and especially of their libertine commander, they had not been long among us till it was discerned that they were as much under the common fears and superstitions as the most credulous of our simple country folk, in so much that what with our family devotions and the tales of witches and warlocks with which every one, as if by concert, delighted to awe them, they were loth to stir

out of their quarters after the gloaming. Swaby, however, though less under those influences than his men, nevertheless partook largely of them, and would not at the King's commands, it was thought, have crossed the kirk-stile at midnight.

But though he was thus infirm with the dread of evil spirits, he was not daunted thereby from ill purposes ; and having one day fallen in with old Mysie Gilmour on the road, a pawkie carlin of a jocose nature, he entered into a blethering discourse with her anent divers things, and from less to more, propounded to honest Mysie ~~that she should~~ lend a cast of her skill to bring about a secret meeting between him and the bonny defenceless Martha Swinton.

Mysie Gilmour was a Christian woman, and her soul was troubled with the proposal to herself, and for the peril with which she saw her minister's daughter environed. But she put on the mask of a light hypocrisy,

and said she would maybe do something if he fee'd her well, making a tryst with him for the day following; purposing in the meanwhile, instead of furthering his wicked ends, to devise, with the counselling of some of her acquaintances, in what manner she could take revenge upon the profligate prodigal for having thought so little of her principle, merely because she was a lanerly widow bent with age and poortith.

Among others that she conferred with was one Robin Finnie, a lad who, when a callan, had been drummer to the host that Nahum Chapëirig led iir the times of the Civil war to the raid of Dunse-hill. He was sib to herself, had a spice of her pawkrie, and was moreover, though not without a leavening of religion, a fellow fain at any time for a spree; besides which he had, from the campaigns of his youth, brought home a heart-hatred and a derisive opinion of the cavaliers, taking all seasons and occasions to give vent to the same,

and he never called Swaby by any other name than the cavalier.

Between Mysie and Robin, with some of his companions, a paction was made that she should keep her tryst with Swaby, and settle on a time and place for him to come, in the delusion of expecting to find Martha Swinton; Robin covenanting, that between him and his friends the cavalier should meet with a lemane worthy of his love. Accordingly, at the time appointed, when she met Swaby on the road where they had foregathered the day before, she trysted him to come to her house on Hallowe'en, which happened to be then at hand, and to be sure no to bring his sword, or any weapon that might breed mischief.

After parting from him, the cavalier going one way and the carlin the other, Robin Finnie threw himself in his way, and going up to him with a seeming respectfulness, said—

“ Ye were speaking, sir, to yon auld wife ; I hope ye hae gi'en her nae offence.”

The look with which Robin looked at Swaby, as he said this, dismayed the gallant cavalier, who cried, gazing back at Mysie, who was hirpling homeward—“ The devil ! is she one of that sort ?”

“ I'll no say what she is, nor what others say o' her,” replied Robin, with solemnity ; “ but ye'll no fare the waur that ye stand weel in her liking.”

Swaby halted, and again looked towards the old woman, who was then nearly out of sight. Robin at the same time moved onward.

“ Friend !” cried the cavalier, “ stop. I must have some talk with you about the old——”

“ Whisht !” exclaimed Robin, “ she's deevilish gleg o' the hearing. I would na for twenty merks she jealoused that I had telt you to take tent o' her cantrips.”

“ Do you mean to say that she’s a witch?” said Swaby in a low and apprehensive voice.

“ I would na say sic a thing o’ her for the world,” replied Robin very seriously ; “ I would ne’er expek to hac a prosperous hour in this world, were I to ca’ honest Mysie Gil-mour ony thing sae uncanny. She’s a pious wife, sir,—deed is she. Me ca’ her a witch ! She would deserve to be hang’d if she was a witch,—an it could be proven upon her.”

But these assurances gave no heartening to the gallant cavalier ; on the contrary, he looked like one that was perplexed, and said, “ Devil take her, I wish I haū had nothing to do with her.”

“ Do,” cried Robin ; “ sir, she’s an auld withered hag, would spean a foal. Surely she did na sae beglamour your senses as to appear like a winsome young lass ? But I hae heard o’ sic morphosings. I’ll no say, hows- ever, that honest Mysie ever tried her art sae far ;—and what I hae heard tell of was done

in the cruelty of jealousy. But it's no possible, captain, that ye were making up to auld Mysie. For the love o' peace, ah ye were sae deluded, sae nothing about it; for either the parish will say that ye hae an unco taste, or that Mysie has cast her cantrips o'er your judgment,—the whilk would either make you a laughing-stock, or, gin ye could prove that she kithed afore you like a blooming damsel, bring her to the wuddy. So I redde ye, captain, to let this story gang nae farther. But mind what I hae been saying, keep weel wi' her, as ye respek yoursel."

In saying these words, Robin turned hastily into the wynd that led to the clachan, laughing in his sleeve, leaving the brave cavalier in a sore state o' dread and wonderment.

CHAP. XXII.

IT seems that shortly after Robin Finnie had departed from the gallant cavalier, a lad, called Sandy Macgill, who was colleagued with him in the plot, came towards the captain with looks cast to the earth, and so full of thought, that he seemingly noticed nothing. Going forward in this locked-up state of the outward sense, he came close upon Swaby, when, affecting to be startled out of his meditations, he stopped suddenly short, and looked in the lieutenant's broad face, with all the alarm he could put into his own features, till he saw he was frightened out of his judgment, when he said—

“Gude be about us, sir, ye hae gotten scaith; the blighting blink o’ an ill e’e has lighted upon you.—O, sir! O, sir! tak tent o’ yoursel!”

Sandý had prepared a deal more to say, but finding himself overcome with an inward inclination to risibility at the sight of Swaby's terrification, he was obligated to flee as fast as he could from the spot; the which wild-like action of his no doubt dismayed the cavalier fully as meikle as all he had said.

But it's the nature of man to desire to do whatever he is forbidden. Notwithstanding all their mystical admonitions, Swaby still persevered in his evil intents, and accordingly he was seen lurking, without his sword, about the heel of the evening, on Hallowe'en, near the skirts of the clachan where Mysie Gilmour lived. And, as it had been conspired among her friends, Mungo Affleck, her gude-brother, a man weel stricken in years, but of a youthy mind, and a perfect pen-gun at a crack, came across the cavalier in his path, and Swaby having before some slight acquaintance with his garb and canny observes, hovered for a little in discourse with Mungo.

“ I counsel you, sir,” said the pawkie auld carl as they were separating, “ no to gang far afield this night, for this is a night that there is na the like o’ in a’ the year round. It’s Hallowe’en, sir, so be counselled by me, and seek your hame betimes ; for mony a ane has met with things on Hallowe’en that they never after forgot.”

Considering the exploit on which the cavalier was then bowne, it’s no to be thought that this was very heartening music ; but, for all that, he said blithely, as Mungo told me himself, “ Nay, not so fast, governor, tell us what you mean by Hallowe’en !”

“ Hallowe’en !” cried Mungo Affleck, with a sound o’ serious sincerity ; “ Do ye no ken Hallowe’en ? But I need na say that. Ye’ll excuse me, captain—what can you Englishers, that are brought up in the darkness o’ human ordinances in gospel things, and who live in the thralldom of episcopalian ignorance, ken of Hallowe’en, or o’ any other solemn

day set apart for an occasion.—O, sir, Hallowe'en among us is a dreadful night ! witches and warlocks, and a' lang-nebbit things, hae a power and a dominion unspeakable on Hallowe'en. The de'il at other times gi'es, it's said, his agents a mutchkin o' mischief, but on this night it's thought they hae a chappin ; and one thing most demonstrable is ;—but, sir, the sun's down—the blessed light o' day is ayont the hill, and it's no safe to be subjek to the whisking o' the mildew frae the tails o' the benweed ponies that are saddled for yon awfu' carnavaulings, where Cluty plays on the pipes ! so I wis you, sir, gude night and weel hame.—O, sir, an ye could be persuaded !—Tak an auld man's advice, and rather read a chapter of THE BOOK, an it should even be the unedifying tenth of Nehemiah, than be seen at the gloaming in this gait, about the dyke-sides, like a wolf yearning for some tender lamb of a defenceless fold."

Mungo having thus delivered himself, went

away, leaving Swaby as it were in a swither; for, on looking back, the old man saw him standing half turned round as if he was minded to go home. The power of the sin was however strong upon him, and shortly after the dusk had closed in, when the angels had lighted their candles at their windows in the sky to watch over the world in the hours of sleep, Swaby, with stealthy steps, came to Mysie Gilmour's door, and softly tirling at the pin was admitted; for all within was ready for his reception.

Robin Finnie and Sandy Macgill having carried thither Zachariah Smylie's black ram, a condumacious and outstropolous beast, which they had laid in Mysie's bed, and keepit frae baaing with a gude fothering of kail-blades, and a cloute soaken in milk.

Mysie, on opening the door, said to the gallant cavalier—

“Just step in, ye'll fin a' ready,” and she blew out her crusie which she had in her

hand, and letting the captain grope in by himself, hirpled as fast as she could to one of the neighbours; for, although she had covenanted with him to come without his sword, she was terrified with the fear of some dreadful upshot.

As soon as he was in, Robin Finnie and Sandy Macgill went and harkened at the window, where they heard the gay gallant stumbling in the floor, churming sweet and amorous words as he went groping his way towards the bed where the auld toop was breathing thickly, mumbling and crunching the kail-blades in a state of as great sensual delight and satisfaction as any beast could well be. But no sooner had the cavalier placed his hand on the horned head of the creature, than he uttered a yell of despair; in the same moment the toop, in little less fright, jumpit out of the bed against him and knocked him down over a stool with a lounder. Verily Providence might be said, with reverence,

to have had a hand in the mirth of his punishment; for the ram recovering its senses before the cavalier, and being in dread of danger, returned to the charge, and began to butt him as if it would have been his death. The cries that ensued are not to be told; all the neighbours came running to the door to see what was the matter, some with lighted sticks in their hands, and some with burning coals in the tongs. Robin Finnie and Sandy Macgill were like to die of laughing; but fearing the wrathful ram might dunt out the bowels or the brains, if he had any, of the poor young cavalier, they opened the door, and so delivered him from its horns. He was, however, by this time, almost in a state of distraction, believing the beast was the real Evil One; so that he no sooner felt himself free and saw the lights, than he flew to his quarters as if he had been pursued by a legion.

Some of his own soldiers that were lying in the clachan, and who had come out with the

rest of the folk, saw through the stratagem, and, forgetting all reverence for their afflicted commander, laughed louder and longer than any body. In short, the story was o'er the whole parish next day, and the very 'weans, wherever the cavalier appeared, used to cry *ba* at him, by which his very life was made a shame and a burden to him, in so much that he applied for leave to give up his commission, and returned home to his kindred in the south of England, and we never heard tell of him after.

CHAP. XXIII.

BUT, although in the exploit of Mysie Gilmour, and Robin Finnie with his confederates, we had a tasting of mirth and merriment, to the effect of lessening the dread and fear in which our simple country-folk held his Majesty's ungracious fine-levers, the cavalier captains and soldiers, still there was a gradual ingrowth of the weight of the oppression, wherewith we were laden more as bondsmen and slaves than as subjects ; and, in the meantime, the spirit of that patriarch, my apostolic grandfather, was gathering to heart and energy within the silent recesses of my afflicted bosom.

I heard the murmuring, deep and sad, of my neighbours, at the insult and the contumely which they were obligated to endure

from the irresponsible licentiousness of military domination—but I said nothing; I was driven, with my pious wife and our simple babies, from my own hearth by the lewd conversation of the commissioned freebooters, and obligated to make our home in an out-house, that we might not be molested in our prayers by their wicked ribaldry,—but I said nothing; I saw my honest neighbours plundered—their sons insulted—and their daughters put to shame,—but I said nothing; I was a witness when our godly minister, after having been driven with his wife and family out to the mercy of the winter's wind, was seized in the very time while he was worshipping the Maker of us all, and taken like a malefactor to prison,—but I said nothing; and I was told the story of the machinations against his innocent virgin daughter, when she was left defenceless among us,—and still I said nothing. Like the icy winter, tyranny had so incrustated my soul, that my taciturnity

seemed as hard, impenetrable, cold, and cruel, as the frozen river's surface, but the stream of my feelings ran stronger and fiercer beneath ; and the time soon came when, in proportion to the still apathy that made my brother and my friends to wonder how I so quietly bore the events of so much, my inward struggles burst through all outward passive forms, and, like the hurling and the drifting ice, found no effectual obstacle to its irresistible and natural destination.

Mrs Swinton, the worthy lady of that saint, our pastor, on hearing what had been plotted against the chaste innocence of her fair and blooming child, came to me, and with tears, in a sense the tears of a widow, very earnestly entreated of me that I would take the gentle Martha to her cousin, the Laird of Garlin's, in Dumfries-shire, she having heard that some intromissions, arising out of pacts and covenants between my wife's cousin and the Laird of Barscob, obligated me

to go thither. This was on the Monday after the battering that the cavalier got from Zachariah Smylie's black ram; and I reasonably thinking that there was judgment in the request, and that I might serve, by my compliance, the helpless residue, and the objects of a persecuted Christian's affections, I consented to take the damsel with me as far as Garlins, in Galloway; the which I did.

When I had left Martha Swinton with her friends, who, being persons of pedigree and opulence, were better able to guard her, I went to the end of my own journey; and here, from what ensued, it is needful I should relate that, in this undertaking, I left my own house under the care of my brother, and that I was armed with my grandfather's sword.

It happened that, on Tuesday the 13th November 1666, as I was returning homeward from Barscob, I fell in with three godly country men about a mile south of the village

of Dalry in Galloway, and we entered into a holy and most salutary conversation anent the sufferings and the fortitude of God's people in that time of trouble. Discoursing with great sobriety on that melancholious theme, we met a gang of Turner's black-cuffs, driving before them, like beasts to the slaughter, several miserable persons to thrash out the corn, that it might be sold, of one of my companions, who, being himself a persecuted man, and unable to pay the fine forfeited by his piety, had some days before been forced to flee his house.

On seeing the soldiers and their prey coming towards us, the poor man would have run away; but we exhorted him not to be afraid, for he might pass unnoticed, and so he did; for, although those whom the military rabiators were driving to thrash his corn knew him well, they were enabled to bear up, and were so endowed with the strength of martyrdom, that each of them, only by a look,

signified that they were in the spirit of fellowship with him.

After they had gone by, his heart, however, was so afflicted that so many worthy persons should be so harmed for his sake, that he turned back, and, in despite of all our entreaties, went to them, while we went forward to Dalry, where we entered a small public, and having ordered some refreshment, for we were all weary, we sat meditating on what could be the upshot of such tyranny.

While we were so sitting, a cry got up, that our companion was seized by the soldiers, and that they were tormenting him on a red-hot gridiron for not having paid his fine.

My blood boiled at the news. I rose, and those who were with me followed, and we ran to the house—his own house—where the poor man was. I beseeched two of the soldiers, who were at the door, to desist from their cruelty; but while I was speaking,

other two, that were within, came raging out like curs from a kennel, and flew at me ; and one of them dared to strike me with his niove in the mouth. My grandfather's sword flew out at the blow, and the insulter lay wounded and bleeding at my feet. My companions in the same moment rushed on the other soldiers, dashed their teeth down their throats, and twisting their firelocks from their hands, set the prisoner free.

In this there was rashness, but there was also redemption and glory. We could not stop at what we had done ;—we called on those who had been brought to thrash the corn to join with us, and they joined ;—we hastened to the next farm ;—the spirit of indignation was there before us, and master and man, and father and son, there likewise found that the hilts of their fathers' covenanted swords fitted their avenging grasps. We had now fired the dry stubble of the land—the flame spread—we advanced, and grew stronger and

stronger. The hills, as it were, clapped their hands, and the valleys shouted of freedom. From all sides men and horse came exulting towards us; the gentleman and the hind knew no distinction. The cry was, “Down with tyranny—we are and we will make free!” The fields rejoiced with the multitude of our feet as we advanced towards Dumfries, where Turner lay. His black-cuffs flung down their arms and implored our mercy. We entered Dumfries, and the Oppressor was our prisoner.

CHAP. XXIV.

HITHERTO the rising at Dalry had been as a passion and a spreading fire. The strength of the soldiers was consumed before us, and their arms became our weapons; but when we had gained possession of Dumfries, and had set a ward over the house where we had seized Turner, I saw that we had waded owre far into the river to think of returning, and that to go on was safer than to come back. It was indeed manifest that we had been triumphant rather by our haste than by the achievements of victorious battle; and it could be hidder from no man's thought that the power and the vengeance both of the government and the prelacy would soon be set in array against us. I therefore be-thought myself, in that peril of our lives and

cause, of two things which seemed most needful ; first, Not to falter in our enterprise until we had proved the utmost of the Lord's pleasure in our behalf ; and, second, To use the means under Him which, in all human undertakings, are required to bring whatsoever is ordained to pass.

Whether in these things I did well, or wisely, I leave to the adjudication of the courteous reader ; but I can lay my hand upon my heart, and say aloud, yea, even to the holy skies, "I thought not of myself nor of mine, but only of the religious rights of my sorely-oppressed countrymen."

From the moment in which I received the blow of the soldier up till the hour when Turner was taken, I had been the head and leader of the people. My sword was never out of my grip, and I marched as it were in a path of light, so wonderful was the immediate instinct with which I was directed to the accomplishment of that adventure, the success

of which overwhelmed the fierce and cruel Antichrists at Edinburgh with unspeakable consternation and panic. But I lacked that knowledge of the art of war by which men are banded into companies and ruled, however manifold their diversities, to one end and effect, so that our numbers having by this time increased to a great multitude, I felt myself utterly unable to govern them. We were as a sea of billows, that move onward all in one way, obedient to the impulse and deep fetchings of the tempestuous breath of the awakened winds of heaven, but which often break into foam, and waste their force in a roar of ineffectual rage.

Seeing this, and dreading the consequences thereof, I conferred with some of those whom I had observed, the most discreet and considerate in the course of the raid, and we came to a resolve to constitute and appoint Captain Learmont our chief commander, he having earned an experience of the art and strata-

gems of war under the renowned Lesley. Had we abided by that determination, some have thought our expedition might have come to a happier issue; but no human helps and means could change what was evidently ordained otherwise. It happened, however, that Colonel Wallace, another officer of some repute, also joined us, and his name made him bright and resplendent to our enthusiasm. While we were deliberating whom to choose for our leader, Colonel Wallace was in the same breath, for his name's sake, proposed, and was united in the command with Learmont. This was a deadly error, and ought in all time coming to be a warning and an admonition to people and nations in their straits and difficulties, never to be guided, in the weighty shocks and controversies of disordered fortunes, by any prejudice or affection so unsubstantial as the echo of an honoured name. For this Wallace, though a man of questionless bravery, and a gentleman

of good account among all who knew him, had not received any gift from Nature of that spirit of masterdom without which there can be no command; so that he was no sooner appointed to lead us on, with Learmonth as his second, than his mind fell into a strange confusion, and he heightened disorder into anarchy by ordering over much. We could not however undo the evil, without violating the discipline that we were all conscious our forces so grievously lacked; but, from the very moment that I saw in what manner he took upon him the command, I augured of nothing but disaster.

Learmonth was a collected and an urbane character, and did much to temper and turn aside the thriftless ordinances of his superior. He, seeing how much our prosperity was dependent on the speed with which we could reach Edinburgh, hastened forward every thing with such alacrity, that we were ready on the morrow by mid-day to set out from

Dumfries. But the element of discord was now in our cause, and I was reproached by many for having abdicated my natural right to the command. It was in vain that I tried to redeem the fault by taking part with Learmont, under the determination, when the black hour of defeat or dismay should come upon us, to take my stand with him, and, regardless of Wallace, to consider him as the chief and champion of our covenanted liberties. But why do I dwell on these intents? Let me hasten to describe the upshot of our enterprise.

As soon as we had formed, in the manner herein related, something like a head and council for ourselves, we considered, before leaving Dumfries, what ought to be done with General Turner, and ordered him to be brought before us; for those who had suffered from his fell orders and licentious soldiery were clamorous for his blood. But when the man was brought in, he was so manifestly mastered by his wine, as his vice often made

him, that we thought it would be as it were to ask a man mad, or possessed, to account for his actions, as at that time to put the frantic drunkard on his defence; so we heeded not his obstreperous menaces, but ordered him to be put into bed, and his papers to be searched for and laid before us.

In this moderation there was wisdom; for, by dealing so gently by one who had proved himself so ruthless an agent of the prelatie aggressions, we bespoke the good opinion even of many among our adversaries; and in the end it likewise proved a measure of justice as well as of mercy. For, on examining his papers, it appeared, that pitiless as his domineering had been, it was far short of the universal cruelty of his instructions from the apostate James Sharp, and those in the council with him, who had delivered themselves over as instruments to the arbitrary prerogatives and tyrannous pretensions of the court. We therefore resolved to proceed no farther against

him, but to keep him as an hostage in our hands. Many, however, among the commonalty complained of our lenity ; for they had endured in their persons, their gear, and their families, great severities ; and they grudged that he was not obligated to taste the bitterness of the cup of which he had forced them to drink so deeply.

In the meantime all the country became alive with the news of our exploit. The Covenanters of the shire of Ayr, headed by several of their ejected ministers whom they had cherished in the solitary dens and hidings in the moors and hills, to which they had been forced to flee from the proclamation against the field-preachings, advanced to meet us on our march. Verily it was a sight that made the heart of man dinle at once with gladness and sorrow to behold, as the day dawned on our course, in crossing the wide and lonely wilderness of Cumnock-moor, those religious brethren coming towards us, moving in silence over

the heath, like the shadows of the slowly-sailing clouds of the summer sky.

As we were toiling through the deep heather on the eastern skirts of the Mearns-moor, a mist hovered all the morning over the pad of Neilston, covering like a snowy fleece the sides of the hills down almost to the course of our route, in such a manner that we could see nothing on the left beyond it. We were then within less than fourteen miles of Glasgow, where General Dalziel lay with the King's forces, keeping in thralldom the godly of that pious city and its neighbourhood. Captain Learmont, well aware, from the eager character of the man, that he would be fain to intercept us, and fearful of being drawn into jeopardy by the mist, persuaded Wallace to halt us some time.

As November was far advanced, it was thought by the country-folk that the mist would clear away about noon. We accordingly made a pause, and sat down on the ground ;

for many were weary, having over-fatigued themselves in their zeal to come up with the main body, and we all stood in need of rest.

Scarcely, however, had we cast ourselves in a desultory manner on the heather, when some one heard the thud of a distant drum in the mist, and gave the alarm; at which we all again suddenly started to our feet, and listening, were not long left in doubt of the sound. Orders were accordingly given to place ourselves in array for battle; and while we were obeying the command in the best manner our little skill allowed, the beating of the drum came louder and nearer, intermingled with the shrill war-note of the spirity fife.

Every one naturally thought of the King's forces; and the Reverend Mr Sample, seeing that we were in some measure prepared to meet them, stepped out in front with all his worthy brethren in the camp, and having solemnized us for worship, gave out a psalm.

By the time we had sung the first three verses the drum and fife sounded so near, that I could discern they played the tune of “John, come kiss me now,” which left me in no doubt that the soldiers in the mist were my own friends and neighbours; for it was the same tune which was played when the men of our parish went to the raid of Dunse-hill, and which, in memorial of that era, had been preserved as a sacred melody amongst us.

Being thus convinced, I stepped out from my place to the ministers, and said, “They are friends that are coming.” The worship was in consequence for a short space suspended, and I presently after saw my brother at the head of our neighbours coming out of the cloud; whereupon I went forward to meet him, and we shook hands sorrowfully.

“This is an unco thing, Ringan,” were his first words; “but it’s the Lord’s will, and HE is able to work out a great salvation.”

I made no answer ; but inquiring for my family, of whom it was a cheering consolation to hear as blithe an account as could reasonably be hoped for, I walked with him to our captains, and made him known to them as my brother.

CHAP. XXV.

SAVING the innocent alarm of the drum in the mist, our march to Lanerk was without hinderance or molestation; and when we arrived there, it was agreed and set forth, on the exhortation of the ministers who were with us, that the Solemn League and Covenant should be publicly renewed; and, to the end that no one might misreport the spirituality of our zeal and intents, a Protestation was likewise published, wherein we declared our adherence and allegiance to the King undiminished in all temporalities; that we had been driven to seek redress by the sword for oppressions so grievous, that they could be no longer endured; and that all we asked and sought for was, the re-establishment of the presbyterian liberty of worship, and the restoration of our godly pastors to their gospel-rights and privileges.

The morrow after was appointed for the covenanting, and to be held as a day of fasting and humiliation for our own sins, which had provoked the Lord to bring us into such state of peril and suffering; and it was a sacred consolation, as Mr Semple showed in his discourse on the occasion, that, in all our long and painful travels from Dumfries, we had been guided from the commission of any offence, even towards those whose hearts were not with us, and had been brought so far on our way as blameless as a peaceable congregation going in the lown of a Sabbath morning to worship their Maker in the house of prayer.

But neither the sobriety of our demeanour, nor the honest protestation of our cause, had any effect on the obdurate heart of the apostate James Sharp, who happened, by reason of the Lord Rothes going to London, to be then in the chief chair of the privy-council at Edinburgh. He knew the deserts of his own guilt, and he hated us, even unto death, for the woes

he had made us suffer. The sough, therefore, of our approach was to the consternation of his conscience as the sound of the wheels of an avenging God, groaning heavily in their coming with the weight of the engines of wrath and doom. Some said that he sat in the midst of the counsellors like a demented man; and others, that he was seen flying to and fro, wringing his hands, and weeping, and wailing, and gnashing his teeth. But though all power of forethought and policy was taken from him, there were others of the council who, being less guilty, were more governed, and they took measures to defend the capital against us. They commanded the gates to be fenced with cannon, and working on the terrors of the inhabitants with fearful falsehoods of crimes that were never committed, thereby caused them to band themselves for the protection of their lives and property, while they interdicted them from all egress, in so much, that many who were friendly to us were frus-

trated in their desire to come with the aid of their helps and means.

• The tidings of the preparations for the security of Edinburgh, with the unhappy divisions and continual controversies in our councils, between the captains and the ministers, anent the methods of conducting the raid, had, even before we left Lanerk, bred much sedition among us, and an ominous dubiety of success. Nevertheless our numbers continued to increase, and we went forward in such a commendable order of battle, that, had the Lord been pleased with our undertaking, there was no reason to think the human means insufficient for the end. But in the mysteries of the depths of His wisdom he had judged, and for the great purposes of his providence he saw, that it was meet we should yet suffer. Accordingly, even while we were issuing forth from the port of the town, the face of the heavens became overcast, and a swift carry and a rising wind were solemn intimations to my troub-

led spirit that the heartening of His countenance went no farther with us at that time.

Nor indeed could less than a miracle in our behalf have availed ; for the year was old in November, the corn was stacked, the leaf fallen, and Nature, in outcast nakedness, sat, like the widows of the martyrs, forlorn on the hills : her head was bound with the cloud, and she mourned over the desolation that had sent sadness and silence into all her pleasant places.

As we advanced the skies lowered, and the blast raved in the leafless boughs ; sometimes a passing shower, as it travelled in the storm, trailed its watery skirts over our disheartened host, quenching the zeal of many,—and ever and anon the angry riddlings of the cruel hail still more and more exasperated our discontent. I observed that the men began to turn their backs to the wind, and to look wistfully behind, and to mutter and murmur to one another. But still we all advanced gra-

dually, however falling into separate bands and companies, like the ice of the river's stream breaking asunder in a thaw.

In the afternoon the fits of the wind became less vehement; the clouds were gathered more compactly together, and the hail had ceased, but the rain was lavished without measure. The roads became sloughs,—our feet were drawn heavily out of the clay,—the burns and brooks raged from bank to brae,—and the horses swithered at the fords, in so much, that towards the gloaming, when we were come to Bathgate, several of our broken legions were seen far behind; and when we halted for the night, scarcely more than half the number with whom we had that morning left Lanerk could be mustered, and few of those who had fallen behind came up. But still Captain Learmont thought, that as soon as the men had taken some repose after that toilsome march, we should advance outright to Edinburgh. Wallace, however, objected, and that

night was spent between them and the ministers in thriftless debate ; moreover, our hardships were increased ; for, by the prohibition of the privy-council against the egress of the inhabitants of the city, we were, as I have said, disappointed of the provisions and succour we had trusted to receive from them, and there was no hope in our camp, but only bitterness of spirit and the breathings of despair.

Seeing, what no man could hide from his reason, our cause abandoned of the Lord, I retired from the main body of the host, and sat alone on a rock, musing with a sore heart on all that had come so rashly to pass. ' It was then the last hour of the gloaming, and every thing around was dismayed and dishevelled. The storm had abated, and the rain was over, but the darkness of the night was closing fast in, and we were environed with perils. A cloud, like the blackness of a mort-cloth, hung over our camp ; the stars withheld their light, and the windows of the castle

shone with the candles of our enemies, who, safe in their strong-hold, were fresh in strength and ready for battle.

I thought of my home, of the partner of my anxieties and cares, of the children of our love, and of the dangers of their defencelessness, and I marvelled with a weeping spirit at the manner in which I had been snatched up, and brought, as it were in a whirlwind, to be an actor in a scene of such inevitable woe. Sometimes, in the passion of that grief, I was tempted to rise, and moved to seek my way back to the nest of my affections. But as often as the thought came over my heart, with its soft and fond enticements, some rustle in the camp of the weary men who had borne in the march all that I had borne, and many of them in the cause far more, yea, even to the martyrdom of dear friends, I bowed my head and prayed for constancy of purpose and fortitude of mind, if the arm of flesh was ordained to be the means of rescuing the gospel, and delivering poor

Scotland from prelatic tyranny, and the thralldom of an antichristian usurpation in the kingly power.

While I was thus sitting in this sad and solitary state, none doubting, that before another night our covenanted army would be, as the hail that smote so sorely on our march, seen no more, and only known to have been by the track of its course on the fields over which we had passed, a light broke in upon the darkness of my soul, and amidst high and holy experiences of consolation, mingled with awe and solemn wonder, I beheld as it were a bright and shining hand draw aside the curtain of time, and disclose the blessings of truth and liberty that were ordained to rise from the fate of the oppressors, who, in the pride and panoply of arbitrary power, had so thrown down the temple of God, and laid waste His vineyard.

I saw, that from our hasty enterprise they would be drawn to commit still more grievous aggressions, and thereby incur some fearful

forfeiture of the honours and predominancy of which they had for so many years shown themselves so unworthy ; and I had a foretaste in that hour of the fulfilment of my grandfather's prophecy concerning the tasks that were in store for myself in the deliverance of my native land. So that, although I rose from the rock whereon I was sitting, in the clear conviction that our array would be scattered like chaff before the wind, I yet had a blessed persuasion that the event would prove in the end a link in the chain, or a cog in the wheel, of the hidden enginery with which Providence works good out of evil. •

CHAP. XXVI.

IN the course of the night, shortly after the third watch had been set, some of those who had tarried by the way came to the camp with the tidings that Dalziel and all the royal forces in Glasgow were coming upon us. This, though foreseen, caused a great panic, and a council of war, consisting, as usual, of ministers and officers, was held, to determine what should be done ; but it was likewise, as usual, only a fruitless controversy. I, however, on this occasion, feeling myself sustained in spirit by the assurances I had received in my meditations on the rock, ventured to speak my mind freely ; which was to the effect, that, taking our dejected condition, the desertion of our friends, and our disappointments from the city, into consideration, we

'could do no better thing than evade the swords of our adversaries by disbanding ourselves, that each might be free to seek safety for himself.

Many were inclined to this counsel; and I doubt not it would have been followed; but, while conferring together, an officer came from the privy-council to propose a cessation of arms till our demands could be considered. It was manifest that this was a wily stratagem to keep us in the snare till Dalziel had time to come up; and I did all in my power to make the council see it in the same light; but there was a blindness of mind among us, and the greater number thought it augured a speedy redress of the wrongs for which we had come to seek reparation. Nor did their obstinacy in this relax till next morning, when, instead of any thing like their improbable hopes, came a proclamation ordering us to disperse, and containing neither promise of indemnity nor of pardon. But then it was

too late. Dalziel was in sight. His army was coming like a stream along the foot of the Pentland-hills,—we saw his banners and the glittering of his arms, and the sound of his musicants came swelling on the breeze.

It was plain that his purpose was to drive us in towards the town ; but had we dispersed we might even then have frustrated his intent. There happened, however, besides Learmont and Wallace, to be several officers among us who had stubborn notions of military honour, and they would not permit so unsoldier-like a flight ; there were also divers heated and fanatical spirits, whom, because our undertaking had been for religious ends, nothing could persuade that Providence would not interfere in some signal manner for their deliverance, yea, even to the overthrow of the enemy ; and Mr Whamle, a minister, one of these, getting upon the top of the rock where I had sat the night before, began to preach of the mighty things that the Lord

did for the children of Israel in the valley of Aijalon, where he not only threw down great stones from the heavens, but enabled Joshua to command the sun and moon to stand still,—which to any composed mind was melancholious to hear.

In sequence to these divisions and contrarities which enchanted us to the spot, Dalziel, considering that we were minded to give him battle, brought on his force; and it is but due to the renown of the valour of those present to record, that, notwithstanding a fearful odds, our men, having the vantage ground, so stoutly maintained their station that we repulsed him thrice.

But the victory, as I have said, was not ordained for us. In the afternoon Dalziel was reinforced by several score of mounted gentlemen from the adjacent counties, and with their horse, about sunset, our phalanx was shattered, our ranks broken,—and then we began to quit the field. The number

of our slain, and of those who fell into the hands of the enemy, did not in the whole exceed two hundred men. The dead might have been greater, but for the compassion of the gentlemen, who had respect to the cause which had provoked us to arms, and who, instead of doing as Dalziel's men did, without remorse or pity, cried to the fugitives to flee, and spared many in consideration of the common wrongs.

When I saw that our host was dashed into pieces, and the fragments scattered over the fields, I fled with the flying, and gained, with about some thirty other fugitives, the brow of a steep part of the Pentland-hills, where the mounted gentlemen, even had they been inclined, could not easily follow us. There, while we halted to rest a little, we heard a shout now and then rise startling from the field of battle below ; but night coming on, all was soon silent, and we sat, in the holiness of our mountain-refuge, in silent rumination

till the moon, rolling slowly from behind Arthur's Seat, looked from her window in the cloud, as if to admonish us to flee farther from the scene of danger.

The Reverend Mr Witherspoon being among us, was the first to feel the gracious admonition, and, rising from the ground, he said—

“ Friends, we must not tarry here, the hunters are forth, and we are the prey they pursue. They will track us long, and the hounds are not of a nature to lose scent, especially when they have tasted, as they have done this day, the rich blood of the faithful and the true. Therefore let us depart; but where, O where shall we find a home to receive us?—Where a place of rest for our weary limbs, or a safe stone for a pillow to our aching heads? But why do I doubt? Blameless as we are, even before man, of all offence, save that of seeking leave to worship God according to our conscience, it cannot be that we shall be left without succour. No,

my friens ! though our bed be the damp grass and our coverlet the cloudy sky, our food the haws of the hedge and our drink the drumly burn, we have made for our hearts the down-beds of religious faith, and have found a banquet for our spirits in the ambrosial truths of the gospel—luxuries that neither a James Sharp nor a Charles Stuart can ever enjoy, nor all the rents and revenues, fines and forfeitures, which princes may exact and prelates yearn to partake of, can buy.”

He then offered up a thanksgiving that we had been spared from the sword in the battle ; after which we shook hands in silence together, and each pursued his own way.

Mr Witherspoon lingered by my side as we descended the hill, and I discerned that he was inclined to be my companion ; so we continued together, stretching towards the north-west, in order to fall into the Lithgow road, being mindet to pass along the skirts of Stirlingshire, thence into Lennox, in the hope

of reaching Argyle's country, by the way of the ferry of Balloch. But we had owre soon a cruel cause to change the course of our flight.

In coming down towards the 'Amond-water, we saw a man running before us in the glimpse of the moonshine, and it was natural to conclude, from his gestures and the solitude of the place, that no one could be so far a-field at such a time, but some poor fellow-fugitive from Rullion-green, where the battle was fought ; so we called to him to stop, and to fear no ill, for we were friends. Still, however, he fled on, and heeded not our entreaty, which made us both marvel and resolve to overtake him. We thought it was not safe to follow long an unknown person who was so evidently afraid, and flying, as we supposed, to his home. Accordingly we hastened our speed, and I, being the nimblest, reached him at a place where he was stopped by a cleft in the rocks on the river's woody brink.

“ Why do you fly so fast from us ?” said I, “ we’re frae the Pentland-hills too.”

At these words he looked wildly round, and his face was as ghastly as a ghost’s in the moonlight ; but distorted as he was by his fears, I discovered in him my neighbour, Nahum Chapelrig, and I spoke to him by name.

“ O, Ringan Gilhaize !” said he, and he took hold of me with his right hand, while he raised his left and shook it in a fearful and frantic manner, “ I am a dead man, my hours are numbered, and the sand-glass of my days is amaist a’ run out. I had been saved from the sword, spared from the spear, and, flying from the field, I went to a farm-house yonder ; I sought admission and shelter for a forlorn Christian man ; but the edicts of the persecutors are more obeyed here than the laws of God. The farmer opened his casement, and speering if I had been at the raid of the Covenanters, which, for the sake of

truth and the glory of God, I couldna deny, he shot me dead on the spot ; for his bullet gaed in at my breast, and is fast in my——”

• He could say no more ; for in that juncture he gave as it were a gurgle in the throat, and swirling round, fell down a bleeding corpse on the ground where he stood, before Mr Witherspoon had time to come up.

We both looked at poor guiltless Nahum as he lay on the grass, and, after some sorrowful communion, we lifted the body, and carrying it down aneath the bank of the river, laid stones and turfs upon it by the moonlight, that the unclean birds might not be able to molest his martyred remains. We then consulted together ; and having communed concerning the manner of Nahum’s death, we resolved not to trust ourselves in the power of strangers in those parts of the country, where the submission to the prelatie enormity had been followed with such woful evidence of depravity of heart. So, instead

of continuing our journey to the northward, we changed our course, and, for the remainder of the night, sought our way due west, by the skirts of the moors and other untrodden ways.

CHAP. XXVII.

AT break of day we found ourselves on a lonely brae-side, sorely weary, hungry and faint in spirit: a few whin-bushes were on the bank, and the birds in them were beginning to chirp,—we sat down and wist not what to do.

Mr Witherspoon prayed inwardly for support^d and resignation of heart in the trials he was ordained to undergo; but doure thoughts began to gather in my bosom. I yearned for my family,—I mourned to know what had become of my brother in the battle,—and I grudged and marvelled, wherefore it was that the royal and the great had so little respect for the religious honesty of harmless country folk.

It was now the nine-and-twentieth day of November, but the weather for the season was open and mild, and the morning 'rose around us in the glory of her light and beauty. As the 'gay and goodly sun looked over the eastern hills, we cast our eyes on all sides; and beheld the scattered villages and the rising smoke of the farms, but saw not a dwelling we could venture to approach, nor a roof that our fears, and the woful end of poor Nahum Chapelrig, did not teach us to think covered a foe.

While we were sitting communing on these things, we discovered, at a little distance on the left, an aged woman hirpling aslant the route we intended to take. She had a poringer in the one hand, and a small kit tied in a cloute in the other, by which we discerned that she was probably some laborous man's wife conveying his breakfast to him in the field.

We both rose, and going towards her, Mr

Witherspoon said, "For the love of God have compassion on two famishing Christians."

The old woman stopped, and, looking round, gazed at us for a space of time, with a countenance of compassionate reverence.

"Heh, sirs!" she then said, "and has it come to this, that a minister of the gospel is obligated to beg an almous frae Janet Armstrong?" And she set down the porringer on the ground, and began to untie the cloute in which she carried the kit, saying, "Little did I think that sic an homage was in store for me, or that the merciful Heavens would e'er requite my sufferings, in this world, wi' the honour of placing it in my power to help a persecuted servant of the living God. Mr Witherspoon, I ken you weel; meikle sweet counselling I hae gotten frae you when ye preached for our minister at Camrachle in the time of the great covenanting. I was then as a lanerly widow, for my gudeman was at the raid of Dunse-hill, and my heart was often

sorrowful and sinking wi' a sinful misdooting of Providence, for I had twa wee bairns and but a toom garnel."

She then opened the kit, which contained a providing of victual that she was carrying, as we had thought, to her husband, a quarrier in a neighbouring quarry; and bidding us partake, she said—

"This will be a blithe morning to John Armstrong, to think that out of our basket and store we hae had, for ance in our day, the blessing of gi'eing a pick to ane o' God's greatest corbies; and he'll no fin his day's dark ae hue the dreigher for wanting his breakfast on account of sic a cause."

So we sat down, and began to partake of the repast with a greedy appetite, and the worthy woman continued to talk.

"Aye," said she, "the country-side has been in a consternation ever since Dalziel left Glasgow;—we a' jealoused that the Lanerk Covenanters would na be able to withstand his

power and the king's forces ; for it was said ye hadna a right captain of war among you a'. —But, Mr Witherspoon, ye could ne'er be ane of the ministers that were said to meddle with the battering-rams o' battle.—No: weel I wat that yours is a holier wisdom—ye would be for peace ;—blessed are the peace-makers."

Seeing the honest woman thus inclined to prattle of things too high for her to understand, Mr Witherspoon's hunger being somewhat abated, he calmly interposed, and turned the discourse into kind inquiries concerning the state of her poor soul and her straitened worldly circumstances ; and he was well content to find that she had a pleasant vista of the truths of salvation, and a confidence in the unceasing care of Providence.

"The same gracious hand that feeds the ravens," said she, "will ne'er let twa auld folk want, that it has been at the trouble to provide for so long. Its true we had a better prospek in our younger days ; but our auld

son was slain at the battle of Worcester, when he gaed in to help to put the English crown on the head of that false Charlie Stuart, who has broken his oath and the Covenant; and my twa winsome lassies diet in their teens, before they were come to years o' discretion. But 'few and evil are the days of man that is born of a woman,' as I hae heard you preach, Mr Witherspoon, which is a blessed truth and consolation to those who have not in this world any continued city."

We then inquired what was the religious frame of the people in that part of the country, in order that we might know how to comport ourselves; but she gave us little heartening.

"The strength and wealth o' the gentry," said she, "is just sooket awa wi' ae fine after anither, and it's no in the power of nature that they can meikle langer stand out against the prelacy."

"I hope," replied Mr Witherspoon, "that

there's no symptom of a laxity of principle among them?"

"I doot, I doot, Mr Witherspoon," said Janet Armstrong, "we canna hae 'a great dependence either on principle or doctrine when folk are driven demented wi' oppression. Many that were ance godly among us can thole no more, and they begin to fash and turn awa' at the sight of their persecuted friends."

Mr Witherspoon sighed with a heavy heart on hearing this, and mournfully shook his head. We then thanked Janet for her hospitable kindness, and rising, were moving to go away.

"I hope, Mr Witherspoon," said she, "that we're no to part in sic a knotless manner; bide here till I gang for John Armstrong and the other twa men that howk wi' him in the quarry. They're bearing plants o' the vineyard,—tarry, I pray you, and water them wi' the water of the Word."

And so saying, she hastened down the track she was going, and we continued on the spot to wait her return.

“ Ringan,” said Mr Witherspoon to me, “ I fear there’s owre meikle truth in what she says concerning the state of religion, not only here, but among all the commonalty of the land. The poor beast that’s overladen may, be stubborn, and refuse for a time to draw, but the whip will at last prevail, until, worn out and weary, it meekly lies down to die. In like manner the stoutness of the covenant-ed heart will be overcome.”

Just as he was uttering these words, a whiz in a whin-bush ne’er to where we were standing, and the sound of a gun, startled us, and on looking round we saw five men, and one of the black-cuffs with his firelock still at his shoulder, looking towards us from behind a dyke that ran along the bottom of the brae. There was no time for consultation; we fled, cowering behind the whin-bushes till we got

round a turn in the hill, which, protecting us from any immediate shot, enabled us to run in freedom till we reached a hazel-wood, which having entered, we halted to take breath.

“ We must not trust ourselves long here, Mr Witherspoon,” said I; “ let us go forward, for assuredly the blood-hounds will follow us in.”

Accordingly we went on; but it is not to be told what we suffered in passing through that wood; for the boughs and branches scourged us in the face, and the ground beneath our feet was marshy and deep, and grievously overspread with brambles that tore away our very flesh.

After enduring several hours of unspeakable suffering beneath those wild and unfrequented trees, we came to a little glen, down which a burn ran, and having stopped to consult, we resolved to go up rather than down the stream, in order that we might not be seen by the pursuers, whom we supposed

would naturally keep the hill. But by this time our strength was in a manner utterly gone with fatigue, in so much, that Mr Witherspoon said it would be as well to fall into the hands of the enemy as to die in the wood. I however encouraged him to be of good cheer; and it so happened, in that very moment of despair, that I observed a little cavern nook aneath a rock that overhung the burn, and thither I proposed we should wade and rest ourselves in the cave, trusting that Providence would be pleased to guide our persecutors into some other path. So we passed the water, and laith ourselves down under the shelter of the rock, where we soon after fell asleep.

CHAP. XXVIII.

WE were graciously protected for the space of four hours, which we lay asleep under the rock. Mr Witherspoon was the first who awoke, and he sat watching beside me for some time, in great anxiety of spirit, as he afterwards told me; for the day was far spent, and the weather, as is often the custom in our climate, in the wane of the year, when the morning rises bright, had become coarse and drumly, threatening a rough night.

At last I awoke, and according to what we had previously counselled together, we went up the course of the burn, and so got out of that afflicting wood, and came to an open and wide moorland, over which we held our journeying westward, guided by the sun, that with a sickly eye was then cowering through the mist to his chamber ayont the hill.

But though all around us was a pathless scene of brown heather, here and there patched with the deceitful green of some perilous well; though the skies were sullen, and the bleak wind gusty, and every now and then a straggling flake of snow, strewed in our way from the invisible hand of the cloud, was a token of a coming drift, still a joyous encouragement was shed into our bosoms, and we saw in the wildness of the waste, and the omens of the storm, the blessed means with which Providence, in that forlorn epoch, was manifestly deterring the pursuer and the persecutor from tracking our defenceless flight. So we journeyed onward, discoursing of many dear and tender cares, often looking round, and listening when startled by the wind whispering to the heath and the waving fern, till the shadows of evening began to fall, and the dangers of the night season to darken around us.

When the snow hung on the heather like

its own bells, we wished, but we feared to seek a place of shelter. Fain would we have gone back to the home for the fugitive, which we had found under the rock, but we knew not how to turn ourselves; for the lights of the moon and stars were deeply concealed in the dark folds of the wintry mantle with which the heavens were wrapt up. Our hearts then grew weary, and more than once I felt as if I was very willing to die.

Still we struggled on; and when it had been dark about an hour, we came to the skirts of a field, where the strips of the stubble through the snow showed us that some house or clachan could not be far off. We then consulted together, and resolved rather to make our place of rest in the lea of a stack, or an outhouse, than to apply to the dwelling; for the thought of the untimely end of harmless Nahum Chapelrig lay like clay on our hearts, and we could not but sorrow that, among the other woes of the vial of the pre-

latic dispensation, the hearts of the people of Scotland should be so turned against one another.

Accordingly going down the rigs, with as little interchange of discourse as could well be, we descried, by the schimmer of the snow, and a ghastly streak of moonlight that passed over the fields, a farm-steading, with several trees and stacks around it, and thither we softly directed our steps. Greatly, however, were we surprised and touched with distress, when, as we drew near, we saw that there was no light in the house, nor the sign of fire within, nor inhabitant about the place.

On reaching the door we found it open, and on entering in, every thing seemed as if it had been suddenly abandoned; but by the help of a pistol, which I had taken in the raid from one of Turner's disarmed troopers, and putting our trust in the protection we had so far enjoyed, I struck a light and kindled the fire, over which there was

still hanging, on the swee, a kail-pot, wherein the family at the time of their flight had been preparing their dinner; and we judged by this token, and by the visible desertion, that we were in the house of some of God's people who had been suddenly scattered. Accordingly we scrupled not to help ourselves from the aumrie, knowing how readily they would pardon the freedom of need in a gospel minister, and a covenanted brother dejected with want and much suffering.

Having finished our supper, instead of sitting by the fire, as we at first proposed to do, we thought it would be safer to take the blankets from the beds and make our lair in the barn; so we accordingly retired thither, and lay down among some unthreshed corn that was lying ready on the floor for the flail.

But we were not well down when we heard the breathings of two persons near us. As there was no light, and Mr Witherspoon guessing by what we had seen, and by this

concealment, that they must be some of the family, he began to pray aloud, thereby, without letting wot they were discovered, making them to understand what sort of guests we were. At the conclusion an old woman spoke to us, telling us dreadful things which a gang of soldiers had committed that afternoon; and her sad story was often interrupted by the moans of her daughter, the farmer's wife, who had suffered from the soldiers an unspeakable wrong.

“ But what has become of our men, or where the bairns hae fled, we know not,—we were baith demented by the outrage, and hid ourselves here after it was owre late,” said that aged person, in a voice of settled grief, that was more sorrowful to hear than any lamentation could have been; and all the sacred exhortations that Mr Witherspoon could employ softened not the obduracy of her inward sorrowing over her daughter, the dishonoured wife. He, however, persuaded them

to return with us to the house; for the enemy having been there, we thought it not likely he would that night come again. As for me, during the dismal recital, I could not speak. The eye of my spirit was fixt on the treasure I had left at home. Every word I heard was like the sting of an adder. My horrors and fears rose to such a pitch, that I could no longer master them. I started up and rushed to the door, as if it had been possible to arrest the imagined guilt of the persecutors in my own unprotected dwelling.

Mr Witherspoon followed me, thinking I had gone by myself, and caught me by the arm and entreated me to be composed, and to return with him into the house. But while he was thus kindly remonstrating with me, something took his foot, and he stumbled and fell to the ground. The accident served to check the frenzy of my thoughts for a moment, and I stooped down to help him up; but in the same instant he uttered a wild

howl that made me start from him ; and he then added, awfully—

“ In the name of Heaven, what is this ? ”

“ What is it ? ” said I, filled with unutterable dread.

“ Hush, hush,” he replied as he rose, “ lest the poor women hear us ; ” and he lifted in his arms the body of a child of some four or five years old. I could endure no more ; I thought the voices of my own innocents cried to me for help, and in the frenzy of the moment I left the godly man, and fled like a demoniac, not knowing which way I went.

CHAP. XXIX.

A KEEN frost had succeeded the snow, and the wind blew piercingly cold ; but the gloom had passed away. The starry eyes of the heavens were all wakefully bright, and the moon was moving along the fleecy edge of a cloud, like a lonely bark that navigates amidst the foaming perils of some dark inhospitable shore. At the time, however, I was in no frame of thought to note these things, but I know that such was then the aspect of that night ; for as often yet, as the freezing wind sweeps over the fields strewn with snow, and the stars are shining vigilantly, and the moon hastily travels on the skirts of the cloud, the passion of that hour, at the sight thereof, revives in my spirit ; and the mourning women,

and the perished child in the arms of Mr Witherspoon, appear like palpable imagery before the eyes of my remembrance.

The speed with which I ran soon exhausted my strength.—I began to reflect on the unavailing zeal with which I was then hastening to the succour of those for whom my soul was suffering more than the tongue of the eloquent orator can express.—I stopped to collect my reason and my thoughts, which, I may well say, were scattered, like the wrack that drifts in the tempestuous air.—I considered, that I knew not a footstep of the road, that dangers surrounded me on all sides, and that the precipitation of my haste might draw me into accidents, whereby the very object would be lost which I was so eager to gair; and the storm within me abated, and the distraction of my bosom, which had so well nigh shipwreckt my understanding, was moderated, like the billows of the ocean when the blasts are gone by; so that,

after I was some four or five miles away from yon house of martyrdom and mourning, a gracious dispensation of composure was poured into my spirit, and I was thereby enabled to go forward in my journey with the circumspection so needful in that woful time.

But in proportion as my haste slackened, and the fiery violence of the fears subsided wherewith I was hurried on, the icy tooth of the winter grew feller in the bite, and I became in a manner almost helpless. The mind within me was as if the faculty of its thinking had been frozen up, and about the dawn of morning I walked in a willess manner, the blood in my veins not more benumbed in its course than was the fluency of my spirit in its power of resolution.

I had now, from the time that our covenanted host was scattered on Rullion-green, travelled many miles ; and though like a bark drifting rudderless on the ocean tides, as the stream flows and the blast blows, I had held

no constant course, still my progress had been havenward, in so much that about sunrise I found myself, I cannot well tell how, on the heights to the south of Castlemilk, and the city of Glasgow, with her goodly array of many towers glittering in the morning beams, lay in sight some few miles off on the north. I knew it not ; but a herd that I fell in with on the hill told me what town it was, and the names of divers clachans, and the houses of men of substance in the lowlands before me.

Among others he pointed out to me Nether Pollock in the midst of a skirting of trees, the seat and castle of that godly and much-persecuted Christian and true Covenanter, Sir George Maxwell, the savour of whose piety was spread far and wide ; for he had suffered much, both from sore imprisonment and the heavy fine of four thousand pounds imposed upon him, shortly after that conclave of Satan, Middleton's sederunt of the privy-council at

Glasgow, where prelatie cruelty was brought to bed of her first-born, in that edict against the ministers at the beginning of the Persecution, whereof I have described the promulgation as it took place at Irvine.

Being then hungered and very cold, after discoursing with the poor herd, who was a simple stripling in the ignorance of innocence, I resolved to bend my way toward Nether Pollock, in the confident faith that the master thereof, having suffered so much himself, would know how to compassionate a persecuted brother. And often since I have thought that there was something higher than reason in the instinct of this confidence; for indeed, had I reasoned from what was commonly said—and, alas! owre truly—that the covenanted spirit was bent, if not broken, I would have feared to seek the gates of Sir George Maxwell, lest the love he had once borne to our cause had been converted, by his own sufferings and apprehensions, into dread

or aversion. But I was encouraged of the spirit to proceed.

Just, however, as I parted from the herd, he cried after me, and pointed to a man coming up the hill at some distance, with a gun in his hand, and a bird-bag at his side, and two dogs at his heel, saying, “ Yon’er’s Sir George Maxwell himsel ganging to the moon. Eh ! but he has had his ain luck to fill his pock so weel already.”

Whereupon I turned my steps toward Sir George, and, on approaching him, beseeched him to have compassion on a poor famished fugitive from the Pentlands.

He stopped, and looked at me in a most pitiful manner, and shook his head, and said, with a tender grief in his voice, “ It was a hasty business, and the worst of it no yet either heard nor over ; but let us lose no time, for you are in much danger if you tarry so near to Glasgow, where Colonel Drummond came yesterday with a detachment of

soldiers, and has already spread them over the country."

In saying these words the worthy gentleman opened his bag, which, instead of being filled with game as the marvelling stripling had supposed, contained a store of provisions.

"I came not for pastime to the moor this morning," said he, presenting to me something to eat, "but because last night I heard that many of the outcasts had been seen yesterday lurking about thae hills, and as I could not give them harbour, nor even let them have any among my tenants, I have come out with some of my men, as it were to the shooting, in order to succour them. But we must not remain long together. Take with you what you may require, and go away quickly; and I counsel you not to take the road to Paisley, but to cross with what speed you can to the western parts of the shire, where, as the people have not been concern-

ed in the raid, there's the less likelihood of Drummond sending any of his force in that direction."

Accordingly, being thus plentifully supplied by the providence of that Worthy, my strength was wonderfully recruited, and my heart cheered. With many thanks I then hastened from him, praying that his private-charitable intents might bring him into no trouble. And surely it was a thing hallowing to the affections of the afflicted Scottish nation to meet with such Christian fellowship. For to the perpetual renown of many honourable West-country families be it spoken, both master and men were daily in the moors at that time succouring the persecuted, like the ravens that fed Elijah in the wilderness.

After parting from Sir George Maxwell I continued to bend my course straight westward, and having crossed the road from Glasgow to Paisley, I directed my steps to the hillier parts of the country, being minded,

according to the suggestions of that excellent person, to find my way by the coast side into the shire of Ayr. But though my anxiety concerning my family was now sharpened as it were with the anguish of fire, I began to reason with myself on the jeopardy I might bring upon them, were I to return while the pursuit was so fierce ; and in the end I came to the determination only to seek to know how it fared with them, and what had become of my brother in the battle, trusting that in due season the Lord would mitigate the ire, and the cruelty that was let loose on all those who had joined in the Protestation and renewed the Covenant at Lanerk.

CHAP. XXX.

TOWARDS the afternoon I found myself among the solitudes of the Renfrewshire moors. Save at times the melancholious note of the peese-weep, neither the sound nor the voice of any living thing was heard there. Being then wearied in all my limbs, and willingly disposed to sleep, I laid myself down on a green hollow on the banks of the Gryffe, where the sun shone with a pleasing warmth for so late a period of the year. I was not, however, many minutes stretched on the grass when I heard a shrill whistle of some one nigh at hand, and presently also the barking of a dog. From the kindly experience I had received of Sir George Maxwell's care this occasioned at first no alarm; but on looking up I beheld at some distance three soldiers with a dog, on the other side of the river.

Near the spot where I lay there was a cloven rock overspread with brambles and slae-bushes. It seemed to me as if the cleft had been prepared on purpose by Providence for a hiding-place. I crept into it, and, forgetting Him by whom I was protected, I trembled with a base fear. But in that very moment He at once rebuked my infirmity, and gave me a singular assurance of His holy wardenship, by causing an adder to come towards me from the roots of the bushes, as if to force me to flee into the view of the pursuers. Just, however, as in my horror I was on the point of doing so, the reptile looked at me with its glittering eyes, and then suddenly leapt away into the brake;—at the same moment a hare was raised by the dog, and the soldiers following it with shouts and halloes, were soon carried, by the impetuosity of the natural incitement which man has for the chace, far from the spot, and out of sight.

This adventure had for a time the effect of rousing me from out the weariness with which I had been oppressed, and I rose and continued my course westward, over the hills, till I came in sight of the Shaws-water,—the stream of which I followed for more than a mile with a beating heart; for the valley through which it flows is bare and open, and had any of the persecutors been then on the neighbouring hills, I must have soon been seen; but gradually my thoughts became more composed, and the terrors of the poor hunted creature again became changed into confidence and hope.

In this renewed spirit I slackened my pace, and seeing, at a short distance down the stream, before me a tree laid across for a bridge, I was comforted with the persuasion that some farm-town could not be far off, so I resolved to linger about till the gloaming, and then to follow the path which led over the bridge. For, not knowing how the inhabitants in those

parts stood inclined in their consciences, I was doubtful to trust myself in their power until I had made some espionage. Accordingly, as the sun was still above the hills, I kept the hollowest track by the river's brink, and went down its course for some little time, till I arrived where the hills come forward into the valley ; then I climbed up a steep hazel bank, and sat down to rest myself on an open green plot on the brow, where a gentle west wind shook the boughs around me, as if the silent spirits of the solitude were slowly passing by.

In this place I had not been long when I heard, as it were not far off, a sullen roar of falling waters rising hoarsely with the breeze, and listening again, another sound came solemnly mingled with it, which I had soon the delight to discover was the holy harmony of worship, and to my ears it was as the first sound of the rushing water which Moses brought from the rock to those of the thirsty

Israelites, and I was for some time so ravished with joy that I could not move from the spot where I was sitting.

At last the sweet melody of the psalm died away, and I arose and went towards the airt from which it had come; but as I advanced, the noise of the roaring waters grew louder and deeper, till they were as the breaking of the summer waves along the Ardrossan shore, and presently I found myself on the brink of a cliff, over which the river tumbled into a rugged chasm, where the rocks were skirted with leafless brambles and hazel, and garmented with ivy.

On a green sloping bank, at a short distance below the waterfall, screened by the rocks and trees on the one side, and by the rising ground on the other, about thirty of the Lord's flock, old and young, were seated around the feet of an aged grey-haired man, who was preaching to them,—his left

hand resting on his staff,—his right was raised in exhortation,—and a Bible lay on the ground beside him.

I stood for the space of a minute looking at the mournful yet edifying sight,—mournful it was, to think how God's people were so afflicted, that they durst not do their Heavenly King homage but in secrecy,—and edifying, that their constancy was of such an enduring nature that persecution served but to test it, as fire does the purity of gold.

As I was so standing on the rock above the linn, the preacher happened to lift his eyes towards me, and the hearers, who were looking at him, turned round, and hastily rising, began to scatter and flee away. I attempted to cry to them not to be afraid, but the sound of the cataract drowned my voice. I then ran as swiftly as I could towards the spot of worship, and reached the top of the sloping bank just as a young man was assisting Mr Swinton to mount a horse which stood ready

saddled tied to a tree ; for the preacher was no other than that godly man ; but the courteous reader must from his own kind heart supply what passed at our meeting.

Fain he was at that time to have gone no farther on with the exercise, and to have asked many questions of me concerning the expedition to the Pentlands ; but I importuned him to continue his blessed work, for I longed to taste the sweet water of life once more from so hallowed a fountain ; and, moreover, there was a woman with a baby at her bosom, which she had brought to be baptized from a neighbouring farm, called the Killochenn,—and a young couple of a composed and sober aspect, from the Back-o'-the-world, waiting to be joined together, with his blessing, in marriage.

When he had closed his sermon and done these things, I went with him, walking at the side of his horse, discoursing of our many grievous anxieties ; and he told me that,

after being taken to Glasgow and confined in prison there like a malefactor for thirteen days, he had been examined by the Bishop's court, and through the mediation of one of the magistrates, a friend of his own, who had a soft word to say with the Bishop, he was set free with only a menace, and an admonishment not to go within twenty miles of his own parish, under pain of being dealt with according to the edict.

Conversing in this manner, and followed by divers of those who had been solaced with his preaching, for the most part pious folk belonging to the town of Inverkip, we came to a bridge over the river.

“Here, Ringan,” said he, “we must part for the present, for it is not meet to create suspicion. There are many of the faithful, no doubt, in thir parts, but it's no to be denied that there are likewise goats among the sheep. The Lady of Dunrod, where I am now going, is, without question, a precious

vessel free of crack or flaw, but the Laird is of a courtly compliancy, and their neighbour, Carswell, she tells me, is a man of the dourert idolatry, his mother having been a papistical woman, and his father, through all the time of the first King Charles, an eydent ettler for preferment."

So we then parted, he going his way to Dunrod Castle, and one of the hearers, a farmer hard by, offering me shelter for the night, I went with him.

CHAP. XXXI.

THE decent, thoughtful, elderly man, who so kindly invited me to his house, was by name called Gideon Kemp; and as we were going towards it together, he told me of divers things that worthy Mr Swinton had not time to do; among the rest, that the preaching I had fallen in with at the linn, which should thenceforth be called the Covenanters' Linn, was the first taste of gospel-fother that the scattered sheep of those parts had tasted for more than eight months.

“What’s to come out o’ a’ this oppression,” said he, “is wonderful to think o’. It’s no in the power of nature that ony government or earthly institution framed by the wit and will o’ man can withstand a whole people. The prelates may persecute, and

the King's power may back their iniquities, but the day and the hour cannot be far off when both the power and the persecutors will be set at nought, and the sense of what is needful and right, no what is fantastical and arbitrary, govern again in the councils of this realm. I say not this in the boast of prediction and prophecy, but as a thing that must come to pass; for no man can say, that the peaceful worshipping according to the Word is either a sin, a shame, or an offence against reason; but the extortioning of fines, and the desolation of families, for attending the same, is manifestly guilt of a dark dye, and the Judge of Righteousness will avenge it."

As we were thus walking sedately towards his dwelling, I observed and pointed out to him a lassie coming running towards us. It was his daughter; and when she came near, panting and out of breath with her haste, she said—

"O, father, ye maunna gang hame;—twa

of Carswell's men hae been speering for you, and they had swords and guns. They're o'er the hill to the linn, for wee Willie telt them ye were gane there to a preaching."

"This comes," said the afflicted Gideon, "of speaking of secret things before bairns; wha could hae thought, that a creature no four years old would have been an instrument of discovery?—It'll no be safe now for you to come hame wi' me, which I'm wae for, as ye're sae sorely weary't; but there's a friend o' ours that lives ayont the Holmstone-hill, aboon the auld kirk; I'll convey you thither, and she'll gi'e you a shelter for the night."

So we turned back, and again crossed the bridge before spoken of, and held our course toward the house of Gideon Kemp's wife's stepmother. But it was not ordain't that I was yet to enjoy the protection of a raftred dwelling; for just as we came to the Daff-burn, down the glen of which my godly guide was mindet to conduct me, as being a

less observable way than the open road, he saw one of Ardgowan's men coming towards us, and that family being of the progeny of the Stewarts, were inclined to the prelatie side.

"Hide yoursel," said he, "among the bushes."

And I den't myself in a nook of the glen, where I overheard what passed.

"I thought, Gideon," said the lad to him, "that ye would hae been at the conventicle this afternoon. We hae heard o't a'; and Carswell has sworn that he'll hae bairn doited Swinton and Dunrod's leddy at Glasgow afore the morn, or he'll mak a tawnle o' her tower."

"Carswell shouldna crack sae croose," replied Gideon Kemp; "for though his castle stands proud in the green valley, the time may yet come when horses and carts will be driven through his ha', and the foul toad and the cauld snail be the only visitors around the unblest hearth o' Carswell."

The way in which that gifted man said these words made my heart dinle; but I hae lived to hear that the spirit of prophecy was assuredly in them: for, since the Revolution, Carswell's family has gone all to drift, and his house become a wastage;—folk say, a new road that's talked o' between Inverkip and Greenock is to go through the very middle o't, and so mak it an awful monument of what awaits and will betide all those who have no mercy on their fellow-creatures, and would exalt themselves by abetting the strength of the godless and the wrenth of the oppressors.

Ardgowan's man was daunted by the words of Gideon Kemp, and replied in a subdued manner, “ It's really a melancholious thing to think that folk should hae gane so wud about ministers and religion;—but tak care of yoursel, Gideon, for a party of soldiers hae come the day to Cartsydyke to take up ony of the Rullion-green rebels that hae fled to thir

parts, and they catcht, I hear, in a public in the Stenners, three men, and have sent them to Glasgow to be hanged."

I verily thought my heart would at this have leapt out of my bosom.

"Surely," replied Gideon Kemp, "the wrath of government is no so unquenchable, that a' the misguided folk concernt in the rising are doom't to die. But hae ye heard the names of the prisoners, or where they belong to?"

"They're o' the shire o' Ayr, somewhere frae the skirts o' Irvine or Kilwinning; and I was likewise told their names, but they're no of a familiarity easy to be remembered."

The horror which fell upon me at hearing this made me forget my own peril, and I sprung out of the place of my concealment, and cried—

"Do you ken if any of them was of the name of Gilhaize?"

Ardgowan's man was astounded at seeing

me standing before him in so instanter a manner, and before making any response, he looked at Gideon Kemp with a jealous* and troubled eye.

“Nay,” said I, “you shall deal honestly with me, and from this spot you shall not depart till you have promist to use nae scaith to this worthy man.” So I took hold of him by the skirts of his coat, and added,—“Ye’re in the hands of one that tribulation has made desperate. I, too, am a rebel, as ye say, from Rullion-green, and my life is forfeited to the ravenous desires of those who made the laws that have created our offence. But fear no wrong, if you have aught of Christian compassion in you. Was Gilhaize the name of any of the prisoners?”

“I’ll no swear’t,” was his answer; “but I think it was something like that;—one of them, I think, they called Finnie.”

“Robin Finnie!” cried I, dropping his coat, “he was wi’ my brother;—I canna

doubt it ;” and the thought of their fate flooded my heart, and the tears flowed from my eyes.

The better nature of Ardgowan’s man was moved at the sight of my distress, and he said to Gideon Kemp—

“ Ye needna be fear’t, Gideon ; I hope ye ken mair o’ me than to think I would betray either friend or acquaintance. But gang na’ to the toun, for a’ yon’er’s in a state o’ unco wi’ the news o’ what’s being doing the day at Cartsdylke, and every body’s in the hourly dread and fear o’ some o’ the black-cuffs coming to devour them.”

“ That’s spoken like yoursel’, Johnnie Jamieson,” said Gideon Kemp ; “ but this poor man,” meaning me, “ has had a day o’ weary travel among the moors, and is greatly in need of refreshment and a place of rest. When the sword, Johnnie, is in the hand, it’s an honourable thing to deal stoutly wi’ the foe ; but when forlorn and dejectit, and more

houseless than the beasts of the field, he's no longer an adversary, but a man that we're bound by the laws of God and nature to help."

Jamieson remained for a short space in a dubious manner, and looking mildly toward me, he said, "Gang you your ways, Gideon Kemp, and I'll ne'er say I saw you; and let your friend den himsel in the glen, and trust me: naebody in a' Inverkip will jealousy that ony of our house would help or harbour a covenanted rebel; so I'll can bring him to some place o' succour in the gloaming, where he'll be safer than he could wi' you."

Troubled and sorrowful as I was, I could not but observe the look of soul-searching scrutiny that Gideon Kemp cast at Jamieson, who himself was sensible of his mistrust, for he replied—

"Dinna misdoot me, Gideon Kemp; I would sooner put my right hand in the fire,

and burn it to a cinder, than harm the hair of a man that was in my power."

"And I'll believe you," said I; "so guide me wheresoever you will."

"Ye'll never thrive, Johnnie Jamieson," added honest Gideon, "if ye're no sincere in this trust."

So after some little further communing, the worthy farmer left us, and I followed Jamieson down the Daff-burn, till we came to a mill that stood in the hollow of the glen, the wheel whereof was happing in the water with a pleasant and peaceful din that sounded consolatory to my hearing after the solitudes, the storms, and the accidents I had met with.

"Bide you here," said Jamieson; "the gudeman's ane o' your folk, but his wife's a thought camstrarie at times, and before I tak you into the mill I maun look that she's no there."

So he hastened forward, and going to the

door, went in, leaving me standing at the sluice of the mill-lade, where, however, I had not occasion to wait long, for presently he came out, and beckoned to me with his hand to come quickly.

CHAP. XXXII.

SAUNERS PATON, as the miller was called, received me in a kindly manner, saying to Jamieson—

“ I aye thought, Johnnie, that some day ye would get a cast o’ grace, and the Lord has been bountiful to you at last, in putting it in your power to be aiding in such a Samaritan work.” “ But,” he added, turning to me, “ it’s no just in my power to do for you what I could wis; for, to keep peace in the house, I’m at times, like many other married men, obligated to let the gudewife tak her ain way; for which reason, I doubt ye’ll hae to mak your bed here in the mill.”

While he was thus speaking, we heard the tongue of Mrs Paton ringing like a bell.

“ For Heaven’s sake, Johnnie Jamieson,” cried the miller. “ gang out and stop her frae

coming hither till I get the poor man hidden in the loft."

Jamieson ran out, leaving us together, and the miller placing a ladder, I mounted up into the loft, where he spread sacks for a bed to me, and told me to lie quiet, and in the dusk he would bring me something to eat. But before he had well descended, and removed the ladder from the trap-door, in came his wife.

"Noo, Sauners Paton," she exclaimed, "ye see what I hae aye prophesied to you is fast coming to pass. The King's forces are at Cartsdyke, and they'll be here the morn, and what's to come o' you then, wi' your covenant-ed havers? But, Sauners Paton, I hae ae thing to tell ye, and that's no twa; ye'll this night flit your camp; ye'll tak to the hills, as I'm a living woman, and no bide to be hang't at your ain door, and to get your right hand chappit aff, and sent to Lanerk for a show, as they say is done and doing wi' a' the Covenanters."

“ Naebody, Kate, will meddle wi’ me, dinna ye be fear’t,” replied the miller ; “ I hae done nae ill, but patiently follow’t my calling at home, so what hae I to dread ?”

“ Did na ye sign the remonstrance to the laird against the curate’s coming ; ca’ ye that naething ? Ye’ll to the caves this night, Sauners Paton, if the life bide in your body. What a sight it would be to me to see you put to death, and maybe to fin a sword of cauld iron running through my ain body, for being colleague wi’ you ; for ye ken that it’s the law now to mak wives responsible for their gude-men.”

“ Kate Warden,” replied the miller, with a sedate voice ; “ in sma’ things I hae ne’er set mysel vera obdōrately against you.”

“ Na ! if I e’er heard the like o’ that !” exclaimed Mrs Paton : “ A cross-graint man, that has just been as a Covenant and Remonstrance to happiness, submitting himsel in no manner o’ way, either to me or those in

authority over us, to talk o' sma' things ! Sauners Paton, ye're a born rebel to your King, and kintra, and wife. But this night I'll 'put it out of your power to rebel on me. Stop the mill, Sauners Paton, and come out, and tak the door on your back ; I hae owre meikle regard for you to let you bide in jeopardy ony langer here."

" Consider," said Sauners, a little dourly, as if he meditated rebellion, " that this is the season of December ; and where would ye hae me to gang in sic a night ?"

" A grave in the kirk-yard's caulder than a tramp on the hills. My jo, ye'll hae to conform ; for, positeevly, Sauners Paton, I'm positive, and for this night, till the blast has blawn by, ye'll hae to seek a refuge out o' the reach of the troopers' spear.—Hae ye stoppit the mill ?"

The mistress was of so propugnacious a temper, that the poor man saw no better for't than to yield obedience so far, as to pull the

string that turned off the water of the mill-lade from the wheel.

“Noo,” said he, “to pleasure you, Kate, I hae stoppit the mill, and to pleasure me, I hope ye’ll consent to stop your tongue; for, to be plain wi’ you, frae my ain house I’ll no gang this night; and ye shall hae’t since ye will hae’t, I hae a reason of my ain for biding at hame, and at hame I will bide;—na, what’s mair, Kate, it’s a reason that I’ll no tell to you.”

“Dear pity me, Sauners Paton!” cried his wife; “ye’re surely grown o’ late an unco reasonable man. But Leddy Stuart’s quadrooped bird they ca’ a parrot, can come o’er and o’er again ony word as weel as you can do reason; but reason here or reason there, I’ll ne’er consent to let you stay to be put to the sword before my een; so come out o’ the mill and lock the door.”

To this the honest man made no immediate answer; but, after a short silence, he said—

“Kate, my queen, I’ll no say that what ye

say is far wrang ; it may be as weel for me to tak a dauner to the top o' Dunrod ; but some providing should be made for a sojourn a night in the wilderness. The sun has been set a lucky hour, and ye may as weel get the supper ready, and a creel wi' some vivers prepared."

"Noo, that's like yoursel, Sauners Paton," replied his wife ; "and surely my endeavour shall not be wanting to mak you comforttable."

At these words Jamieson came also into the mill, and said, "I hope, miller, the wife has gotten you persuaded o' your danger, and that ye'll conform to her kind wishes." By which I discernt, that he had purposely egget her on to urge her gudeman to take the moors for the advantage of me.

"O, aye," replied the miller ; "I could na but be consenting, poor queen, to lighten her anxieties ; and though for a season," he added, in a way that I well understood, "the eyes above may be closed in slumber, a watch will

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and ready ; therefore let us go into the house, and cause no further molestation here.”

The three then retired, and, comforted by the words of this friendly mystery, I confided myself to the care of the defenceless sleeper's ever-wakeful Sentinel, and for several hours enjoyed a refreshing oblivion from all my troubles and fears.

Considering the fatigue I had undergone for so many days and nights together, my slumber might have been prolonged perhaps till morning, but the worthy miller, who withstood the urgency of his terrified wife to depart till he thought I was rested, soon after the moon rose came into the mill and wakened me to make ready for the road. So I left my couch in the loft, and came down to him ; and he conducted me a little way from the house, where, bidding me wait, he went back, and speedily returned with a small basket in his hand of the stores which the mistress had provided for himself.

Having put the handle into my hand, he led me down to a steep shoulder of a precipice nigh the sea-shore, where, telling me to follow the path along the bottom of the hills, he shook me with a brotherly affection by the hand, and bade me farewell,—saying, in a jocose manner, to lighten the heaviness with which he saw my spirit was oppressed,—that the gudewife would make baith him and Johnnie Jamieson suffer in the body for the fright she had gotten. “For ye should ken,” said he, “that the terror she was in was a’ bred o’ Johnnie’s pawkerie. He knew that she was aye in a dread that I would be laid hands on ever since I signed the remonstrance to the laird; and Johnnie thought, that if he could get her to send me out provided for the hills, we would find a way to make the provision yours. So, gude be wi’ you, and dinna be overly down-hearted, when ye see how wonderfully ye are ta’en care o’.”

Being thus cherished, cheered, and exhort-

ed, by the worthy miller of Inverkip, I went on my way with a sense of renewed hope dawning upon my heart. The night was frosty, but clear, and the rippling of the sea glittered as with a sparkling of gladness in the beams of the moon, then walking in the fullness of her beauty over those fields of holiness whose perennial flowers are the everlasting stars. But though for a little while my soul partook of the blessed tranquillity of the night, I had not travelled far when the heaven of my thoughts was overcast. Grief for my brother in the hands of the oppressors, and anxiety for the treasures of my hearth, whose dangers were doubtless increased by the part I had taken in the raid, clouded my reason with many fearful auguries and doleful anticipations. All care for my own safety was lost in those overwhelming reflections, in so much, that when the morning air breathed upon me as I reached the brow of Kilbride Hill, had I been then questioned as to the manner I had

come there, verily I could have given no account, for I saw not, neither did I hear, for many miles, aught, but only the dismal tragedies with which busy imagination rent my heart with affliction, and flooded my eyes with the gushing streams of a softer sorrow.

But though my journey was a continued experience of inward suffering, I met with no cause of dread, till I was within sight of Kilwinning. Having purposed not to go home until I should learn what had taken place in my absence, I turned aside to the house of an acquaintance, one William Brekenrig, a covenanted Christian, to inquire, and to rest myself till the evening. Scarcely, however, had I entered on the path that led to his door, when a misgiving of mind fell upon me, and I halted and looked to see if all about the mailing was in its wonted state. His cattle were on the stubble—the smoke stood over the lum-head in the lown of the morning—the plough lay unyoked on the croft, but it had been lately

used, and the furrows of part of a rig were newly turned. Still there was a something that sent solemnity and coldness into my soul, I saw nobody about the farm, which at that time of the day was strange and unaccountable; nevertheless I hastened forward, and coming to a park-yett, I saw my old friend leaning over it with his head towards me. I called to him by name, but he heeded me not; I ran to him and touched him, but he was dead.

The ground around where he had rested himself and expired was covered with his blood; and it was plain he had not been shot long, for he was warm, and the stream still trickled from the wound in his side.

I have no words to tell what I felt at the sight of this woful murder; but I ran for help to the house; and just as I turned the corner of the barn, two soldiers met me, and I became their prisoner.

One of them was a ruthless reprobate, who wanted to put me to death; but the other

beggit my life : at the moment, however, my spirit was as it were in the midst of thunders and a whirlwind.

They took from me my pistols and my grandfather's sword, and I could not speak ; they tied my hands behind me with a cutting string, and I thought it was a dream. The air I breathed was as suffocating as sulphur ; I gasped with the sandy thirst of the burning desert, and my throat was as the drowth of the parched earth in the wilderness of Kedar.

Soon after this other soldiers came from another farm, where they had been committing similar outrages, and they laughed and were merry as they rehearsed their exploits of guilt. They taunted me and plucked me by the lip ; but their boasting of what they had done flashed more fiercely over my spirit than even these indignities, and I inwardly chided the slow anger of the mysterious Heavens for permitting the rage of those agents of the apostate James Sharp and his compeers, whom

a mansworn king had so cruelly dressed with his authority.

But even in the midst of these repinings and bitter breathings, it was whispered into the ears of my understanding, as with the voice of a seraph, that the Lord in all things moveth according to his established laws ; and I was comforted to think, that in the enormities whereof I was a witness and partaker, there was a tempering of the hearts of the people, that they might become as swords of steel, to work out the deliverance of the land from the bloody methods of prelatie and arbitrary domination ; in so much, that when the soldiers prepared to return to their quarters in Irvine, I walked with them—their captive, it is true ; but my steps were firm, and they marvelled to one another at the proudness of my tread.

There was at the time a general sorrowing throughout the country, at the avenging visitations wherewith all those who had been in the raid, or who had harboured the fugitives,

were visited. Hundreds, that sympathized with the sufferings of their friends, flocked to the town to learn who had been taken, and who were put to death or reserved for punishment. The crowd came pressing around as I was conducted up the gait to the tolbooth; the women wept, but the men looked doure, and the children wondered what for an honest man should be brought to punishment. Some, who knew me, cheered me by name to keep a stout heart; and the soldiers grew fear't for a rescue, and gurled at the crowd for closing so closely upon us.

As I was ascending the tolbooth-stair, I heard a shriek; and I looked round and beheld Michael, my first-born, a stripling then only twelve years old, amidst the crowd, stretching out his hands and crying, "O, my father, my father!"

I halted for a moment, and the soldiers seemed to thaw with compassion; but my hands were tied,—I was a captive on the

threshold of the dungeon, and I could only shut my eyes and bid the stern agents of the persecutors go on. Still the cry of my distracted child knelled in my ear, and my agony grew to such a pitch, that I flew forward up the steps, and, in the dismal vaults within, sought refuge from the misery of my child.

END OF VOLUME II.

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